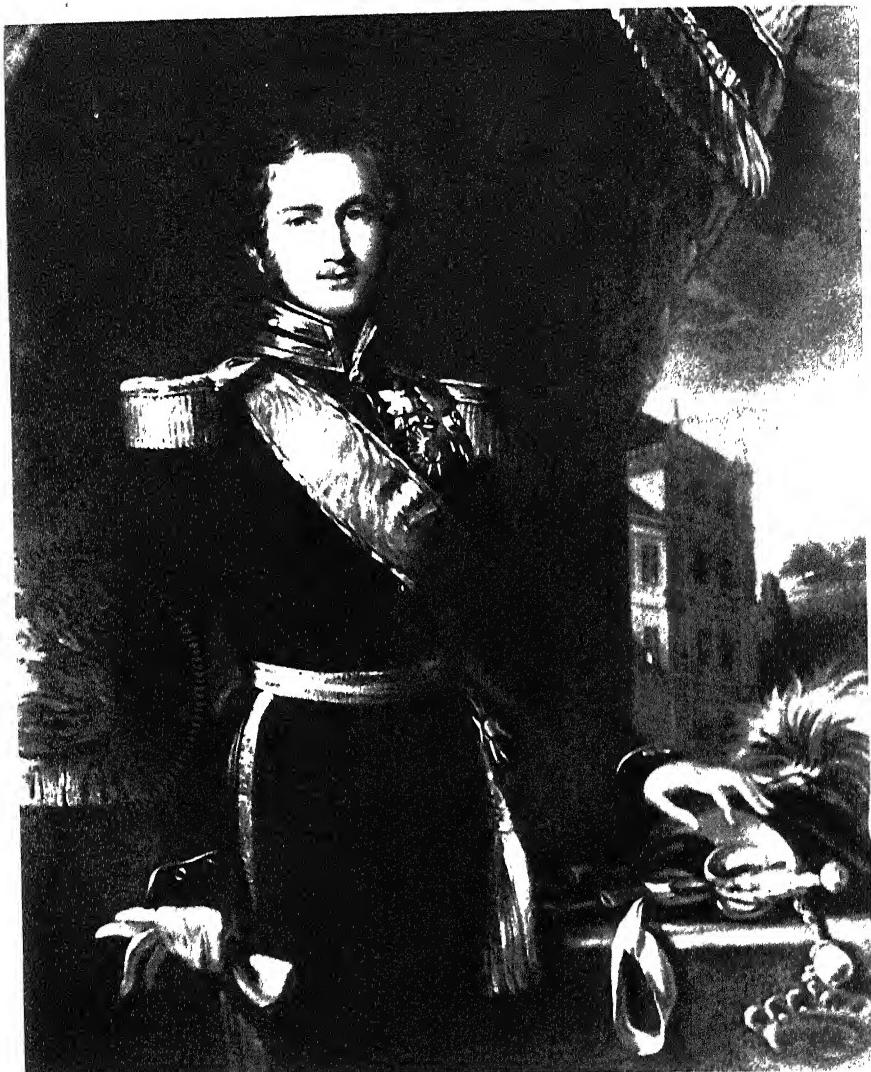


LETTERS OF THE PRINCE CONSORT
1831—1861

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H.R.H. Prince Albert

From the mezzotint by C. E. Wagstaff, after George Patten

LETTERS OF THE *D.* PRINCE CONSORT

1831—1861

SELECTED AND EDITED BY
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AND TRANSLATED BY
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PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY OF
HIS MAJESTY THE KING

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE British nation, whose history has seemingly been so greatly favoured by fortune, suffers from one notable drawback in the fact that it has possessed no continuous hereditary princely House. In the course of the twenty centuries of its history, it has constantly changed its ruling dynasties : from the Romans to the Anglo-Saxons, from the Norman kings to the Angevin-Plantagenets ; thence to the Houses of Lancaster and York ; from the Tudors to the Stuarts, with the interlude of the Cromwellian Commonwealth ; and finally, from the House of Orange to the Hanoverians, and onwards to the Queen who married a Prince of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha (the House since 1917 has been entitled the House of Windsor) — nearly all of these successive dynasties non-English, and displaying a variety, the like of which is to be found only in Germany. In England, however, this has not stood in the way of development in the direction of unity and integration, as it did in Germany.

The English monarchy has been debarred by this variety and the foreign character of its ruling Houses, and perhaps even more by the ways in which the Crown has passed from one dynasty to the next, from availing itself of the powerful principle of Legitimacy, as the Habsburgs, the Hohenzollerns, and the Bourbons were able to do. For it was not just force, as in the case of William the Conqueror, that gave them their thrones, but grounds of law, slight though these sometimes were. In such a soil the Legitimist idea could strike no roots.

As a consequence of these facts, in some measure the ruling Houses, however the individual representatives may have varied, remained foreigners to the English throughout, the sole exceptions being those of the House of Tudor. Under the later Hanoverians

the prestige of the Crown was to all intents shattered. When Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1837, the Crown was at its lowest ebb. No wonder then that, with this weakness of the Legitimist idea, and of the dignity of the Crown itself, the doctrine of the divine right of kings could not, as could the Continental monarchies, prevent the rise of a rival mightier than the Throne, destined, from the time of Cromwell onwards, to be preponderant over it—Parliament. The power of Parliament waxed in proportion as the Throne and its occupants grew weaker.

In Queen Victoria the English nation gained for the first time a real Queen on whom it could gaze in love and reverence and gratitude, as it had gazed on no ruler for centuries. For the Queen, with full realisation, exalted the Crown to the height of its splendour, but yet of her own free will submitted herself to its law ; she gave, and thereby gained. She was the first monarch to unite the English Royal House firmly with the nation ; under her, therefore, the balance of power between Crown and Parliament necessarily settled itself to the advantage of the former once again. Her son, Edward VII, continued her work by making himself an instrument of foreign policy at the service of the Government of the day. Her grandson, George V, made the Crown national and imperial, and it was under him that it attained to its present high and peculiar significance ; for the Statute of Westminster of 1931 made the Crown, as worn by the King of England, the one and only tie binding the British Dominions together. In these times, when crowns which appeared more secure have been crashing to the ground, the British monarchy stands stronger than ever before, and the genuineness of its vitality was proved in a very impressive fashion in 1936, when the institution of the Crown actually asserted itself successfully in opposition to its wearer.

Nevertheless, Queen Victoria did not give the Crown its proper direction at the very start of her reign. For the first few years she was at the mercy of party ties, highly derogatory to the peculiar position of the Sovereign. Much of the increase in dignity and prestige gained by the monarchy at her accession fell away in the three following years. To her marriage and to the personality of her husband was due the marked renewal of that prestige.

Prince Albert was a member of the House of Coburg, which in the first half of the nineteenth century gained extensive dynastic ex-

pansion. The Coburgers regarded Leopold, a younger brother of Albert's father, Duke Ernest I, as their spiritual leader. Leopold had married Princess Charlotte of Great Britain, then heiress to the throne of England. But her early death had disappointed his hopes. He was offered, but refused, the Crown of Greece, and ended by accepting the newly constituted Kingdom of the Belgians. He stood out in his time as champion of constitutional and liberal government, an ideal which enabled his country to weather every storm. To him was due the marriage of Victoria and Albert, and to him and Stockmar the political ideal, which in the person of Albert was destined to influence the course of British history.

Albert's historical task was to win by systematic labour for the Crown the position it should properly occupy. A considerable portion of this book deals with the methods by which he planned and carried out this object in detail. Here it is sufficient to state the fact that he succeeded completely in attaining his object, and in inspiring his wife with his ideas so absolutely, that his influence continued to prevail after his early death; in fact, it was only in the long years of widowhood that it came to its full fruition. When all is considered, it is in essence due to the merits of the German prince, who for less than two decades sat upon, or rather stood by, the throne of England as the faithful guardian of the Crown, that to-day the British monarchy is able to command the power, prestige, and internal strength, required by the British Empire to hold together its self-governing members, and to take rank as a World Power.

There is yet another fact to note in this brief survey. Whilst the German people may feel proud that one arose from their midst, destined to be of such high significance to the British Empire, they may be still more proud when it is shown that Prince Albert never forswore his German nationality in England, but remained true to it to the day of his death. During the years of struggle for German national unity he kept up a close connection with the leading personages involved, and served the German people in thought and action; for, belonging by birth and adoption to both of these Germanic nations, he aspired to nothing less than an Anglo-German alliance. Who can say how the destiny of Europe might have shaped itself, supposing he had been granted a longer span of life?

The aim of this selection from the Prince Consort's correspond-

ence and note-books is, as in the case of those of Queen Victoria,¹ to present a biographical picture drawn from his own utterances, and a Life written in letters. To this end everything characteristic of the writer's personality, everything that may shed a light on his life and spiritual development, has been included.

The collection contains over 350 letters and memoranda, of which the large majority have never yet been published. All the 28 letters to Queen Victoria during the engagement period (only short passages from eight letters having appeared in print); a letter to Albert's daughter, the Crown Princess Victoria, of 24th April, 1861; all the letters to King Frederick William IV of Prussia, 26 in number (the only one already published² is that of 1st December, 1850, and is not counted among these); forty-nine letters to King William I; all letters (22) to Queen Augusta of Prussia, and finally, the letter of 22nd July, 1861, to Duke Ernest II, appear for the first time. Leave was granted to supplement and complete the letters to Queen Victoria in the marriage period from the originals in the Royal Archives at Windsor. The letters of the engagement period come also from the Windsor Archives. The above-mentioned letter to Duke Ernest II is derived from the ducal Archives at Coburg, while all the rest of the letters quoted come from the Brandenburg-Prussian Archives at Charlottenburg.

Of the documents already published, far the greatest part is taken from the *Life of His Royal Highness the Prince Consort*, by Sir Theodore Martin. A number of letters in Part I are reproduced from General Charles Grey's *The Early Days of the Prince Consort*. The letters to Duke Ernest II are taken from his Memoirs (Ernst II, *Aus meinem Leben und meiner Zeit*, Berlin, 1887-9); those to Bunsen and Prince Karl of Leiningen from the *Deutsche Revue*, vol. xxii, 1897; a number of letters to British statesmen come out of the First Series of *The Letters of Queen Victoria* (London, 1907). Nearly all the letters published here were written in German. Those addressed to Englishmen were in English.'

¹ *Queen Victoria : Ein Frauenleben unter der Krone*, Berlin, 1936.

² Josef von Radowitz : *Nachgelassene Briefe und Aufzeichnungen zur Geschichte der Jahre 1848-1853*, W. Möring, Stuttgart-Berlin, 1922, p. 368.

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

DR. KURT JAGOW, in his effort to portray the Prince Consort as the one man with the brains and the capacity to restore the fallen prestige of the British monarchy, makes certain points which no Englishman who has made any study of the early years of the reign can be expected to accept without some modification. The low reputation of the monarchy at the time of the Queen's accession was entirely due to the inferiority of the characters who had represented it for a considerable number of years in succession. The Queen, young as she was, was well grounded in the facts of her constitutional position by Lord Melbourne, who naturally belonged to one party in the State, and it is not fair to presume that her young sympathies, which were at that early period personal rather than political, would have caused her to favour anything in the shape of a "Queen's Party," whomever she married. Even in later life, when she conceived a personal distaste for Mr. Gladstone, there is no evidence that she brought unconstitutional influence to bear against his policy when he was in power.

Prince Albert was trained by two very wise and far-seeing men with a direct view to the position that they intended him to occupy, and he imbibed their teaching to the full. They taught him to think out every subject down to the minutest detail. This habit of thought stimulated his ardent nature to communicate the results of it to others, and the letters written by him in the first years of his married life are mature with the maturity of King Leopold I and Baron Stockmar. At the same time a little more experience of men might have caused him to hesitate before addressing such a letter as he wrote at the age of twenty-six to Bishop Wilberforce on his appointment to the See of Oxford (p. 97). This letter is remarkable

as defining the German view of the duties of the Churches in relation to the State—a view which Bismarck tried in vain to enforce, and which Herr Hitler in our own day is attempting to carry out to its bitterest extreme.

Again, it is somewhat unfair to attribute Prince Albert's depression of spirits, as the years went on, so very largely to the Queen's inability to march in step with his mind, and to British failure to appreciate his efforts to improve conditions of every sort. As a general rule, those who worked with him conceived a very genuine admiration for his powers of work and his absolute rectitude and honesty of mind. The excellence of the schemes which he originated and the thought and labour he expended in making them successful received all the credit due to them.

And yet, something was lacking. In spite of all his care to avoid overstepping the constitutional limits of his position, in spite of efforts to confer very real benefits on the country of his adoption, he failed to form any real personal contact with Englishmen. His love for detailed theorising kindled no answering spark in the easy-going English mind, which is apt to regard too much theory as so much waste of time.

He felt this want of sympathy deeply. It increased his natural moodiness, which, in its turn, affected the spirits of the Queen. She lost some of her natural buoyancy through association with his deep seriousness.

His influence upon German and Prussian politics was largely exerted through the ladies of the Prussian Royal House. The letters to Queen Augusta and the Crown Princess Frederick show how he hoped that their influence with their husbands might lead German policy into Liberal channels. Ernst Berner (*Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Hauses Hohenzollern*, vol. iii) discusses how far Augusta's arguments influenced her husband's policy. He does not allow that they had much effect. But Bismarck's bitter antagonism against the Empress and against the Crown Princess Frederick continued throughout his career, and colours the memories of his old age to such an extent that it is clear that he feared their influence all through those years.

The German Editor is certainly correct in saying that the Prince Consort's personality lived on many years after he himself had passed away.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

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The German edition of this book, selected and edited by Dr. Jagow, has to some extent been subjected to further selection and editing for this English edition. The extracts originally in English which were translated for the German edition have of course been given in the original English here.

PART ONE
YOUTH

IN the very heart of Germany, on the southern edge of the Thuringian Forest, there stands a charming capital town, with fine Renaissance buildings, a wonderful old market-place, and a palace dating from the Middle Ages but reconstructed in the Gothic style, the whole dominated by its lofty fortress : that is Coburg, once the capital of the Duchy of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. About an hour distant there stands, in the midst of a large park, a romantic ducal summer residence—the Rosenau. Here it was that on 26th August, 1819, Prince Albert first saw the light.

The line from which Albert descended was the elder, or Ernestine, branch of the House of Wettin, whose history is closely bound up with that of the German Reformation. The Elector Frederick the Wise was the protector of Luther. John the Steadfast was the organiser of the Reformation under the German princes. John Frederick the Magnanimous it was who paid for his championship of the new creed with the loss of his lands and his status as an Elector, both of which were transferred to the Albertine branch. Within the Saxon-Thuringian heritage, which was retained by the Ernestines, there were as time went on, permanent losses of property, resulting from countless partitions and family settlements. In the Duchy of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, Duke Ernest I, the father of Albert, succeeded in adding to his possessions that of Saxe-Gotha, but was obliged to hand over Saalfeld to Saxe-Meiningen in exchange for it, in 1826. After that date his Duchy was named Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

The most prominent characteristic of Duke Ernest I was a deep love of sport. In 1817 he married the seventeen-years-old Princess Louise of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg, who presented him with two sons : Ernest (later Duke Ernest II), born in 1818, and Albert, born in 1819. They were named after the founders of the two Wettin lines. The marriage was not a happy one, for the Duke and Duchess were separated in 1824 and divorced in 1826. All the

stories about the Duchess's alleged unfaithfulness before Albert's birth and the conclusions drawn from them are mere gossip. Both parties married again. The Duchess, who had but five years more to live, married a Baron von Hanstein in 1826, whilst the Duke in 1832 married his niece, Princess Marie of Württemberg. Queen Victoria bore witness in after years : "The Prince never forgot his mother and spoke with much tenderness and sorrow of her, and was deeply affected in reading, after his marriage, the accounts of her sad and painful illness. One of the first gifts he made to the Queen was a little pin he had received from her when a little child."¹

The two brothers, Ernest and Albert, in spite of differences of nature and character, clung to each other with tender affection, and spent a very happy childhood together. Their widowed grandmothers, Duchess Augusta of Coburg and Duchess Caroline of Gotha, vied with one another in the effort to replace their mother. Between the former at the Rosenau, in Schloss Ehrenburg at Coburg, and at Ketschendorf close by, and the latter at Reinhardtsbrunn and at Gotha, they spent the years of their youth, with constant changes of home.

Albert was a very delicate child, shy and sensitive, not strong physically ; even at four years old he had to be carried by his tutor up and down stairs. Early of an evening he was apt to be over-powered by sudden exhaustion, so that he might fall asleep all in a moment and slip from his chair ; throughout his life late hours were a torture to him. In his boyhood his large blue eyes and yellow locks, his precocious, vivacious nature and his drollery "won all hearts by their beauty and charm." He inherited from his mother many of her mental and physical qualities. "The Prince," wrote Baron Stockmar later,² "bears a striking resemblance to his mother, and at the same time, though differing in much, takes after her in many respects, both physical and mental. He has the same mobility and readiness of mind, and the same intelligence, the same overruling desire and talent for appearing kind and amiable to others, the same tendency to *espièglerie*, to treat things and people in a droll and often amusing fashion, the same habit of not dwelling long on a subject." His blue eyes and yellow hair came to him from her also, whereas it was from his father's mother that his strongly marked features were inherited. His taste for art, and especially the remarkable later development of a talent for landscape gardening, came down from his father.

Surprisingly early in boyhood and youth there rose to the surface

¹ See Grey, *Early Years*, p. 8.

² See Martin, vol. i, p. 33; Stockmar, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 331.

the qualities which were to be the distinguishing mark of his future career. There were combined in him a silent, meditative temperament and great will-power and self-restraint. His circumspection, skill, and quickness in taking a point, and his practical common sense were amazing ; men were struck by his clear impassionate judgment and his power of convincing by strictly logical argument ; there was soon perceptible a certain vein of doctrinairism running through it all. His untiring interest in science and research, his aptitude and keenness for work, and his steady sense of duty were greatly helped by a splendid memory and a pronounced sense of order and method. Added to this was a fine, lovable, and grateful nature, devoid of self-seeking or vanity, actuated solely by the desire to increase the happiness of his fellow-men and improve their position. Spotlessly pure in heart and disposition, deeply convinced of the truth of the Christian verities, he was a man of the highest principle, in harmony with himself, to whom those round him naturally looked up with boundless love and admiration.

He loved and was familiar with Nature in all her manifestations, and by taking long expeditions discovered for himself the beauties of the country round his home.

He and his brother Ernest formed a fine collection of natural objects—minerals, shells, plants, and the like—which in its turn became the foundation of the collections to be seen to-day in the Castle of Coburg. He liked shooting and fishing because they brought him nearer to Nature ; at the same time, any creature in pain excited in him deep compassion. Riding, too, appealed to him more as a lover of Nature than merely as a sport. He was a good rider, swimmer, and gymnast, a fine shot, and a brilliant fencer.

His favourite art was music. He sang well, and founded a singing society at Gotha, taking part in it himself. He played the organ and piano, and even composed a number of songs and ballads, thirty of which have appeared in print. A talent for drawing and painting displayed itself in an original way in caricature from life.

Interested as the Prince was in all and everything, there was one thing with which he desired to have nothing to do—politics ! Stockmar wrote of him at the age of twenty : “ Full of the best intentions and the noblest resolutions, he often falls short in giving them effect. His judgment is in many things beyond his years ; but so far, at least, he has shown not the slightest interest in politics. Even while most important events are in progress, and their issues undecided, they fail to induce him to open a newspaper. He holds, moreover, all foreign journals in abhorrence ; and

though he declares that the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung* is the only paper one might need or care to read, he does not read even that.”¹

And this but a short time before Albert was to become the husband of the Queen of England!

In social intercourse he was one of those who are happier in a small circle, and expand and come out of themselves better thus. He could give fuller play to his natural cheerfulness and amiability, his pleasure in deep and serious conversation, and not less to his delight in fun and joking, aided by his power of mimicry. In larger gatherings and official ceremonies he suffered from a certain psychological feeling of repression. His whole being felt cramped; he was embarrassed, and easily became formal and reserved, appearing “cold and stiff.” Making conventional conversation, especially with ladies, remained a heavy burden all through his life, and only his limitless sense of duty enabled him to conquer it.

Albert’s destiny—he was aware of it from the first—was his English cousin, Victoria, the future Queen. Even at three years old he had heard the “little May-flower” spoken of as his future companion in life, and himself had never thought of anyone else as his wife. There had been two English marriages in his family. In 1816 Leopold, his father’s youngest brother, had married Princess Charlotte, then heiress to the throne of England; but she had died within a year on the birth of her dead child. In 1818 Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, the fourth son of George III, married Albert’s father’s youngest sister, Victoria, widow of Prince Emich Karl zu Leiningen, and from this marriage was born, on 24th May, 1819, Victoria, next in succession to the English throne.

The plan of an alliance between Albert and Victoria, both nearly of an age, had been keenly pursued in the Coburg family, to which the Duchess of Kent belonged, while its special supporter was Leopold, the uncle of both, who in 1831 had become King of the Belgians. His confidant in the matter was a Coburger, Stockmar, his former physician-in-ordinary. During the years between the death of Charlotte and Leopold’s assumption of the Crown at Brussels, this man had been his confidential secretary; he possessed a very exact knowledge of England, its institutions, political parties, and politicians. Thus there could be no more efficient ally and intermediary in paving the way to a marriage between Albert and Victoria.

The first time the two royal children met one another was in May, 1836, when Duke Ernest I, in pursuance of this far-seeing scheme,

¹ See Stockmar, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 331.

paid a visit of four weeks at Kensington Palace to the Duchess of Kent, accompanied by his sons. Victoria and Albert were then sixteen years old. It was observed with much satisfaction that the impression made by the prince upon his cousin was most favourable ; Victoria was deeply struck with his character and handsomeness, and agreed heartily with the marriage scheme which was then for the first time suggested to her. On 7th June she wrote to King Leopold : “ I must thank you, my beloved Uncle, for the prospect of *great* happiness you have contributed to give me, in the person of dear Albert. Allow me, then, my dearest Uncle, to tell you how delighted I am with him, and how much I like him in every way. He possesses every quality that could be desired to render me perfectly happy. He is so sensible, so kind, and so good, and so amiable, too. He has, besides, the most pleasing and delightful exterior and appearance you can possibly see.”¹

Now that all had gone off so well and desirably, Uncle Leopold and Stockmar planned Albert's education with a special view to his future position, which might now be counted as a certainty. On returning from England, the brothers were to go at once for ten months to Brussels, so that Albert, under his uncle's personal supervision, might study the theory of constitutional monarchy in Europe and a working example of Liberal government, as practised in Belgium. The special subjects he chose were mathematics, modern languages, and history ; he was particularly interested in the social-statistical and anthropometric researches of the mathematician, Quetelet, whose aim was to demonstrate the laws followed by individuals as well as communities, as shown by physical and moral phenomena. The princes then spent a year and a half at the University of Bonn, where Albert worked hard at law, political economy, philosophy, and natural history. A Hanoverian military tutor was attached to him to impart to him the most necessary military acquirements. In April, 1837, the princes broke off their studies and made an expedition on foot through Switzerland and Northern Italy, including Milan and Venice ; on the road Albert collected souvenirs of the journey, and sent them bound in a book as a gift to the Queen in England ; this she treasured all her life. In the autumn of 1838, when their studies were completed, the brothers separated. Ernest went to Dresden to begin life as a soldier, as befitted a future ruler ; Albert completed his education with the tour which all young Germans of education had to perform — six months' study of the art of Italy. Soon after his return he started, in October, 1839, on his second and decisive visit to England.

¹ See *Letters of Queen Victoria*, vol. i, p. 62.

Victoria was now no longer the little princess of former days. On 20th June, 1837, she had become Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. Her attitude to the thought of an alliance with Albert had not altered its basis, but now, in the enjoyment of her new freedom and independence, she was not prepared to marry as hastily as she had imagined earlier. Six months after her accession she communicated her scruples (in a letter of 4th January, 1838) to Uncle Leopold. They were both too young to marry, Albert not yet of age, and not sufficiently perfect in the English language ; he must win more experience, greater observation, and more self-confidence. On Albert's arrival in Brussels King Leopold told him for the first time of the marriage scheme and of Victoria's opinions regarding it. Albert agreed entirely ; he displayed himself in a light which fully confirmed Leopold's confidence in him. The King wrote to Stockmar : "He possesses all the qualities required to fit him for the position which he will occupy in England. His understanding is sound, his apprehension clear and rapid, and in all things concerning personal demeanour, he has the correct feeling. He observes well, and is prudent and foreseeing, without anything about him in the least cold or morose." Shortly afterwards the little Queen performed two significant acts : she conferred the Order of the Garter on Albert's father, who was present at her Coronation in June, 1838 ; and instructed Stockmar, now her confidential adviser, to accompany Albert on his Italian travels ; later on Sir Francis Seymour, then a subaltern in the 19th Regiment, was added to the Prince's suite in Italy.

When Albert was back from Italy and the critical moment of his arrival in England was approaching, fresh scruples assailed the Queen. She wrote in somewhat abrupt terms to her uncle on 15th July, 1839,¹ that firstly, there had been no contract regarding the marriage, and secondly, she did not desire to make any final promise for two or three years, "for, apart from my youth, and my *great* repugnance to change my present position, there is *no anxiety* evinced in *this country* for such an event, and it would be more prudent, in my opinion, to wait till some such demonstration is shown—else if it were hurried it might produce discontent.

"Though all the reports of Albert are most favourable, and though I have little doubt I shall like him, still one can never answer beforehand for *feelings*, and I may not have the *feeling* for him which is requisite to ensure happiness. I *may* like him as a friend, and as a *cousin*, and as a *brother*, but not *more* ; and should this be the case (which is not likely) I am *very* anxious that it should be under-

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 224.

stood, that I am *not* guilty of any breach of promise, for *I never gave any.*"

Before Albert left for England, King Leopold told him of this attitude taken up by the young Queen, who certainly was not so very absolute in her refusal ("which is not likely"); but he did make it out more harsh and absolute than it was, for he apparently represented the two or three years' delay as four years. In any case, Albert crossed to England with the intention of refusing to wait any longer, if Victoria could not make up her mind there and then. However, all the girl Queen's objections and scruples were dissolved when Albert arrived with his brother, and she saw him again. On that day, 10th October, she finds him "beautiful and fascinating," and on the 11th she writes: "Albert is, in fact, so fascinating and looks so handsome; he has such beautiful blue eyes, a delicate nose, a beautiful mouth with a small moustache, and very slight whiskers. His figure is fine, broad at the shoulders and slender at the waist. I have to keep a tight hold on my heart." And on the 12th¹: "Albert's beauty is *most* striking, and he is so amiable and unaffected—in short, very *fascinating*; he is excessively admired here." On the 13th she speaks of her "dearest Albert," and remarks that meeting him face to face has entirely altered her views about matrimony; on the 14th she has decided on the marriage, and on the 15th she offers her young cousin her heart and hand in an indescribably moving scene.

Thus was the destiny fulfilled which, ever since their childhood, had been decided for them both, and in spite of all political wire-pulling it turned into a love match. In her original and natural way Victoria was so full of joy that she could not help imparting it to all her entourage. Albert, cooler and more reserved, kept his feelings more to himself; only in his letters to his fiancée does he express them in restrained terms. "The letters which she received from him then are now her greatest treasure," the Queen confessed after her husband's death. In them Albert did not ignore his high future calling; during the engagement period he set before himself the high moral determination to become "a personality, a character, of a kind to win the respect, love, and confidence of the Queen and the nation," and "to be in all things noble, manly, princely."

It was the Queen's wish that the marriage should take place in February, 1840, and preparations for it were begun immediately. On 14th November Albert returned to Germany with his brother. On the 28th Victoria announced her coming marriage to the Privy Council; on 8th December it was proclaimed at Coburg, and on

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 237.

16th January, 1840, it was announced by the Queen from the throne at the Opening of Parliament. At the same time in England negotiations were set on foot for Albert's naturalisation, his household, his rank, his revenue, his coat of arms, etc.

These matters, however, did not proceed without setbacks and vexations. The omission of the bridegroom's religion in the Queen's Proclamation led to unpleasant remarks, and to a report that the Prince was a Roman Catholic—which under the Constitution would have been an absolute bar to the marriage of the Queen Regnant; the House of Commons had the meanness to reduce his proposed grant of £50,000 to £30,000; the House of Lords made difficulties about his rank; the Prince was forced against his will to take as his Private Secretary the secretary of the Whig Minister, Lord Melbourne, a man known as a partisan in politics; in the question of arms, he saw his fiancée obliged to declare that he had no prescriptive right to bear arms in England, but that as Sovereign she could and would grant them to him by Royal Licence; but, Her Majesty repeated, it was only possible by Royal Licence. (No distinctive title was granted to him; it was not till eighteen years later that he received the title and dignity of Prince Consort.) Albert had hoped for a long, quiet stay at Windsor after the marriage, but had to be content with the Queen's reply: "You have not, dear Albert, understood the matter. You forget, my dearest, that I am the Sovereign, and that business can stop and wait for nothing. . . . Therefore two or three days is already a long time to be absent."¹ In short, the young bridegroom had plenty of opportunities of proving his oft-boasted talent for self-restraint.

Meantime, the Prince was preparing for his bridal journey, in company with his father and brother and a small suite. On 26th December, after great festivities, he departed from his beloved Coburg and went to the other capital of the Duchy. On 28th January, 1840, he left Gotha, here also surrounded by the sympathy of his relations and of the population, and himself deeply distressed at parting from his home and its dear memories, and not unassailed by qualms concerning what awaited him, but twenty years old, on the throne of the British Empire. However, in leaving his German Fatherland he registered a solemn vow: "Whilst striving and working indefatigably for the country to which I shall belong in future and in which I am called to occupy a high position, I shall not cease to be a loyal German, Coburger, Gothaner."

After a short stay in Brussels with his Uncle Leopold, the Prince endured a stormy crossing from Calais to Dover, where he received a hearty popular ovation. He proceeded to Canterbury, and arrived

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 269.

MARRIAGE

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at Buckingham Palace on the afternoon of 8th February, where he was received in State by the Queen and the whole Court. On the 10th, the State wedding took place in the Chapel of St. James's Palace.

Victoria and Albert had taken the decisive step of their whole lives.

1831-1840

To Duke Ernest I of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

ROSENAU, July 1831.

DEAR PAPA,—You will long before this have reached your journey's end, and will already have gone all over London. I wish I was with you, to see all the sights that you will have seen. We heard of you yesterday from Thiel, the last place at which you passed the night ; and we were very glad to hear that you were quite well. We are also quite well, dear Papa, and though I should like to be with you, yet we like being here also, and are very happy at the Rosenau. The quiet of the place too is very agreeable, for our time is well regulated and divided. The day before yesterday was the fête of the Gymnasium at Coburg, to which we were invited ; so we drove into the town in the morning, and heard a beautiful speech from Professor Troupheller. I am sure it would have pleased you.

We stayed the whole day at Coburg, as our Grand-Aunt¹ arrived in the afternoon from Lobenstein, and we visited her immediately. She is staying at Ketschendorf with dear Grandmama.²

We are going next Saturday to Gotha, to which we look forward with much pleasure. We will write to you from thence, and tell you how we made the journey. If the weather is only " good ! "

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

LONDON, 1st June 1836.

DEAR MAMA,—Accept mine and Ernest's heartfelt thanks for your dear, kind letter. I would have answered you sooner if I had not been suffering for some days from a bilious fever. The climate of

¹ Louise, widow of Prince Henry XLIII of Reuss.

² Duchess Augusta of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld.

this country, the different way of living, and the late hours, do not agree with me. I am now, however, fairly upon my legs again.

My first appearance was at a levee of the King's, which was long and fatiguing, but very interesting. The same evening we dined at Court, and at night there was a beautiful concert, at which we had to stand till two o'clock. The next day, the King's birth-day was kept. We went in the middle of the day to a Drawing-room at St. James's Palace, at which about 3,800 people passed before the King and Queen and the other high dignitaries, to offer their congratulations. There was again a great dinner in the evening, and then a concert which lasted till one o'clock. You can well imagine that I had many hard battles to fight against sleepiness during these late entertainments.

The day before yesterday, Monday, our Aunt¹ gave a brilliant ball here at Kensington Palace, at which the gentlemen appeared in uniform, and the ladies in so-called fancy dresses. We remained till four o'clock. Duke William of Brunswick, the Prince of Orange and his two sons, and the Duke of Wellington, were the only guests that you will care to hear about.

Yesterday we spent with the Duke of Northumberland at Sion, and now we are going to Claremont. From this account you will see how constantly engaged we are, and that we must make the most of our time to see at least some of the sights in London. Dear Aunt is very kind to us, and does everything she can to please us; and our cousin also is very amiable. We have not a great deal of room in our apartment, but are nevertheless very comfortably lodged.

To Duke Ernest I of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

BRUSSELS, 29th November 1836.

DEAR PAPA,—We should be so glad to accept your invitation to go to Coburg for a few days, and to spend Christmas there. But if we are to profit by our stay here, I am afraid we must deny ourselves that pleasure. Such an expedition would require five or six weeks, and our course of study would be quite disturbed by such an interruption. We told dear uncle the purport of your letter, and he said he would write to you on the subject.

¹ The Duchess of Kent.

[Extract.]

To the Same.

BONN, June 1837.—A few days ago I received a letter from Aunt Kent, enclosing one from our cousin. She told me I was to communicate its contents to you, so I send it on with a translation of the English. The day before yesterday I received a second and still kinder letter from my cousin, in which she thanks me for my good wishes on her birth-day. You may easily imagine that both these letters gave me the greatest pleasure.

To Queen Victoria.

BONN, 26th June 1837.

MY DEAREST COUSIN,—I must write you a few lines to present you my sincerest felicitations on that great change which has taken place in your life.

Now you are Queen of the mightiest land of Europe, in your hand lies the happiness of millions. May Heaven assist you and strengthen you with its strength in that high but difficult task.

I hope that your reign may be long, happy, and glorious, and that your efforts may be rewarded by the thankfulness and love of your subjects.

May I pray you to think likewise sometimes of your cousins in Bonn, and to continue to them that kindness you favoured them with till now. Be assured that our minds are always with you.

I will not be indiscreet and abuse your time. Believe me always, your Majesty's most obedient and faithful servant, ALBERT.

To Duke Ernest I of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

4th July 1837.—The death of the King of England has everywhere caused the greatest sensation. From what uncle Leopold, as well as aunt, writes to us, the new reign has begun most successfully. Cousin Victoria is said to have shown astonishing self-possession. She undertakes a heavy responsibility, especially at the present moment, when parties are so excited, and all rest their hopes on her. Poor aunt has again been violently attacked in the newspapers; still she has found good defenders.

To the Same.

BONN, 30th July 1837.—Uncle Leopold has written to me a great deal about England and all that is going on there. United

though all parties are in high praise of the young Queen, the more do they seem to manoeuvre and intrigue with and against each other. On every side there is nothing but a network of cabals and intrigues, and parties are arrayed against each other in the most inexplicable manner.

To the Same.

BONN, 12th November 1837.

DEAR PAPA,—The last term really ended before we had time to collect our thoughts about it.

We have already plunged into the midst of the new one.

This winter will be one of very hard work for us, for we are overwhelmed with lectures, papers, exercises, &c. &c.

The chief subjects of our studies at present are Roman law, constitutional law and political science, and the principles of finance. We also attend two courses of historical lectures by Löbell and A. W. von Schlegel, and a philosophical lecture (Anthropology and Philosophy) by Fichte. At the same time we shall not fail to give attention to the study of modern languages.

To Duchess Caroline of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg.

BONN, 19th Nov. 1837.—The day before yesterday I received a letter from uncle Leopold, expressing a wish that we should visit him at Brussels during Christmas week, when there will be no lectures. You may easily imagine, dear Grandmama, how we look forward to this short visit. I am the more glad of it, because we shall then have an opportunity of learning more distinctly what Uncle thinks of the coming separation, next spring, of our hitherto united lives, and also of giving him, at the same time, our own views of it.

The prospect of that sad moment is ever in my thoughts ; so we wish, while we still have time, to do all we can to relieve the pain of it, and so gild the pill.

To Duke Ernest I of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

BONN, 26th Dec. 1837.—We had thought of celebrating your birth-day with our dear uncle at Brussels, but the tiresome blow I gave my knee prevented us from having that pleasure. I am, however, quite well again, only I must still spare my leg a little, so that,

on the one hand, I could not undertake the fatigues of Brussels, and, on the other, I shrank from being seen limping about. We therefore remained quietly at Bonn, where we are busy with our studies. . . . You will no doubt have taken much interest in the affairs at Cologne.¹ Here it is the all-engrossing subject, and it is very evident that the much-extolled loyalty of the Rhinelanders is wonderfully loose. "Prussian" and "Lutheran heretic" are common terms of contumely. The party of the priests seems to be very strong. They find their chief support in the aristocracy and the common people; the aristocracy in particular being very bigoted.

To the Same.

BONN, 23rd May 1838.—So you go to England to the Coronation, and afterwards we shall have the happiness of seeing you with us. Inconvenient and tiring as the doings will be in London, they will still be very interesting. It is really a pity that Mama should not be going also; it would have been more natural, and I am sure the Queen will be very sorry not to see her. At the same time I must say that I never thought dear Mama would make up her mind to accept such an invitation.

To the Same.

VENICE, 12th Oct. 1838.—How much thanks I owe you, dear Papa, for allowing me to make such a splendid tour. I am still bewildered with everything I have seen in this short time. Herr Florschütz's reports will have shown you how successful we have been in penetrating into every part of Switzerland. The weather favoured us, and we have enjoyed to the utmost the beauties of that country. Milan and, even more, heavenly Venice, possess treasures of art which amaze me.

To Duchess Caroline of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg.

ROSENNAU, 18th October 1838.

DEAR GRANDMAMA,—I have again delayed writing to you, but when a man is once sunk in idleness, it is difficult to get out of it.

I learned from your dear letter to Ernest that you are better and

¹ During the Church disputes at Cologne, Archbishop Droste-Vischering was removed to Minden.

that you have moved into your pretty winter residence in all its new splendour.

How perishable such splendour is we felt seriously yesterday, when, if God had not held his protecting hand over us, the whole palace of Coburg might have become a prey to the flames, nor we ourselves able in any way to escape.

A fire is lit in our rooms every morning lest we should find them cold when we come to town occasionally in the afternoon. It happened the day before yesterday that we stayed in town after the Play, in order not to catch cold driving back to the Rosenau. The next morning I was awoke by an unpleasant smell ; I sprang out of bed to see whether they had not forgotten to open the register in one of the stoves. The smoke met me thicker and thicker, but I could not discover anything. In the fourth room I was met by the flames darting towards me ; it was all on fire. I called out "Fire ! fire !" when Ernest and Cart came from their rooms to my assistance. No living soul was in this wing of the palace, except us three ; it was also so early, that nobody was astir in the neighbourhood. You can fancy our alarm. We did not take long to consider, but closed all the doors and shut ourselves up with the fire. There were only two jugs with water, and a jug of camomile-tea at our command, of which we made the most. Ernest took my cloak and his own and threw them upon the flames, while I dragged all my bedding there, and pressed the mattresses and large counterpanes against the burning wall. Cart lifted a marble table with incredible strength and threw it against the bookcase enveloped in flames, causing it to fall down. Having thus subdued the fire, we could think of calling for more help.

Ernest ran just as he got out of bed downstairs to the sentry, who gave the alarm, whilst I and Cart were still working upstairs. The heat and smoke were so powerful that all the windows had fallen out ; even the glasses of the framed pictures were cracked, and the pictures shrivelled, and the paint of the doors is quite charred.

Help now came in haste from all sides : a number of workmen brought water up and extinguished the smouldering fire. A book-stand with many books, and all our prints, two chairs, a table, a looking-glass, &c. have been burnt.

There is no other harm done, but that Cart and I have burnt the soles of our feet as we went barefooted into the cinders.

The accident was caused by the ignorance of a stoker who had heated a stove that was not meant to be used, and on which books and prints were lying, and against which a quantity of maps were standing.

The only picture that is not injured is the one of the fire at the Palace of Gotha.

Farewell now, dear Grandmama, and always love your faithful grandson, ALBERT.

To Prince William zu Löwenstein-Wertheim-Freudenberg.¹

COBURG, 26th October 1838.

DEAR LÖWENSTEIN,—A thousand thousand thanks for your dear friendly letter, which is a proof to us that you still sometimes think of your true friends. I believe that the pleasant days which we spent together, partly in useful occupations, partly in cheerful intercourse, will ever appear to me as the happiest of my life. In spite of our unrestrained intimacy and our many jokes, the utmost harmony always existed between us. How pleasant were our winter-concerts—our theatrical attempts—our walks to the Venusberg—the swimming-school—the fencing-ground ! I dare not think back upon all these things.

Ernest is now going to Dresden in order to sacrifice himself to Mars. He will there throw himself entirely into a military existence.

I shall shortly begin my Italian travels. I will occasionally give you news of myself from different places ; but you must also write to me ; I will always let you know my addresses. In ten or twelve days I shall have left my home behind. I shall not set out till Ernest also starts his journey, so that he may not be left behind alone. The separation will be frightfully painful to us. Up to this moment we have never, as long as we can recollect, been a single day away from each other ! I cannot bear to think of that moment !

To Duchess Caroline of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg.

COBURG, 29th Nov. 1838.—Now I am quite alone. Ernest is far off and I am left behind ; still surrounded by so many things which keep up the constant illusion that he is in the next room. To whom could I turn, to whom could I pour out my heart better

¹ A student friend at Bonn University.

than to you, dear Grandmama, who always take such interest in everything that happens to us ; who also know and understand us both so well ?

We accompanied Ernest as far as Lobenstein, where we spent an evening and the following morning together, with our dear old great-aunt.¹ She was delighted to have us with her once more, maybe for the last time, for she is eighty years old, and very poorly. The two cousins were also very kind to us.

During the evening we were very happy together. The next morning brought the pain of parting. We only stayed till twelve o'clock, and then drove home, this time without Ernest, arriving at ten o'clock at night, almost frozen to death.

We went, as usual, in an open carriage, and had to endure the cold of 16 degrees [Reaumur] while crossing the lovely Frankenwald.

Now Ernest has slept his first night at Dresden. This day will also bring to him the feeling that something is wanting. I wrote to him to-day and expect a few lines from him to-morrow or the day after, which I will send to you at once if you like it.

If I have not written to you for some time, it was because during the last days we really had so much to talk and to care about. I am sure you will not be angry with me. I must now give up the custom of saying *we* and use the *I*, which sounds so egotistical and cold.

In *we* everything sounded much softer, for the *we* expresses the harmony between different souls, the *I* rather the resistance of the individual against outward forces, though also confidence in its own strength. I am afraid of tiring you with my talk, and yet in this present silence it is a comfort to be able to talk.

To Prince William of Löwenstein.

FLORENCE, 25th February 1839.

DEAR LÖWENSTEIN, —I have long wished to write you a few lines, to thank you for your dear letter of the 3rd January, which I received here, sent after me from Gotha. But you know that the best intentions are ever the most rarely carried out, and thus it is that I am so late in writing.

Oh ! Florence, where I have been for two months, has gathered to herself noble treasures of art. I am often quite intoxicated with

¹ Louise, Princess of Reuss-Lobenstein, eldest sister of the Prince's and Queen's maternal grandmother.

delight when I come out of one of the galleries. The country round Florence, too, possesses extraordinary attractions. I have lately thrown myself entirely into the whirl of society. I have danced, dined, supped, paid compliments, have been introduced to people, and had people introduced to me ; have spoken French and English —exhausted all remarks about the weather —have played the amiable —and, in short, have made *bonne mine à mauvais jeu*. You know my *passion* for such things, and must therefore admire my strength of character, that I have never excused myself —never returned home till five in the morning—that I have emptied the carnival cup to the dregs.

My stay at Florence will not last much longer. On the 10th of March I go to Rome, where I shall remain three weeks. Thence I shall hasten to Naples, and before the overpowering heat begins, hope to have the white peaks of the Alps once more in sight.

I must now again say good-bye, dear Löwenstein. Think sometimes with affection of your sincere friend, ALBERT.

To Duke Ernest I of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

ROME, 17th May 1839.

DEAR PAPA,—We arrived yesterday evening in the world-renowned city of Rome, and I at once sit down to announce it. We took four days to perform the journey, visiting several places of note on our way ; such as the celebrated waterfall at Terni, which is really more grand than any of those we saw in Switzerland ; the lake of Trasimene ; the bridge of Augustus at Narni, &c.

Yesterday I took a walk with Mr. Seymour through the streets of Rome, but I find it hard to persuade myself that I am really in Rome. But for some beautiful palaces, it might just as well be any town in Germany. By the 1st of April we expect to have seen all the sights here, and on the first days of next month to be able to continue our journey to Naples.

To Prince William of Löwenstein.

COBURG, 30th June 1839.

DEAR LÖWENSTEIN,—Your dear letter from Berlin has given me great pleasure, for I had heard nothing of you for so long. So you are well and happy, and bear your fate in being an inhabitant of the

sandy region of Berlin with courage and patience. I can, however, imagine that the University and the many distinguished and celebrated men who labour there, afford a rich compensation. When I say the word "University," and remember all the good resolutions which I there made, I am quite ashamed of my present life, which consists chiefly in dawdling about, and exchanging compliments. I must, however, acknowledge that my late Italian tour was of great advantage to me. It has made an impression upon me, not so much by its particular incidents as by its general character. My range of observation has been doubled, and my power of forming a right judgment will be much increased by having seen for myself.

Italy is truly a most interesting country, and an inexhaustible source of knowledge. One contrives, however, to taste extraordinarily little of the enjoyment which one there promises oneself. In many, many respects the country is far behind what one had expected. In the climate, in the scenery, in the study of the arts, one feels most disagreeably disappointed.

On the whole, my life was very pleasant. The society of a man so highly distinguished as Baron Stockmar was most precious and valuable to me. I was also accompanied by a young and very amiable Englishman, a Mr. Seymour, with whom I have become very intimate. Above all, that complete harmony which is so necessary for any enjoyment of life, always existed amongst us.

On the 21st of June, we celebrated Ernest's birth-day here, his twenty-first, when he came of age. I had also the great happiness of being declared on the same day, by a Government patent, of full age, and I am now my own master, as I hope always to be, and under all circumstances. In consequence of this event we have had great fêtes here, in which the whole country has most heartily taken part.

On the 13th (July) I shall accompany Ernest to Dresden, and stay with him for about fourteen days. Then must I go to a place that I hate mortally, that charming Carlsbad, where Papa is taking the waters, and much wishes me to be with him. I hope this affair will be over by the middle of August.

You can imagine how pleased I was to see Ernest and dear Coburg again. Florschütz I found had married; Wichmann I met at Geneva with my Aunt Juliana, the Grand-Duchess. Oh! if I could only come across you somewhere. I should be so glad

to be with you, if only for a few hours. I forget that you have something better to do than to read my scrawls. So good-bye for a little. Let me hear from you, and don't forget your faithful friend, ALBERT.

To Music Director Späth.

DRESDEN, 23rd July 1839.

MY DEAR MUSIC DIRECTOR,—You will have received through Privy Councillor Florschütz the last parcel of my contributions to the Singing Society got together by me at Gotha.

I send you to-day Beethoven's much wished-for and highly admired *Praise of Music*. As parts of it only could be got here, I had to write to Leipzig for it, which accounts for your only now receiving it. You will find the instrumental music written out in parts, as well as that for the vocal performers, which, by a lucky mistake of the shopkeeper, is in duplicate. The whole comes more expensive than I at first expected. It will amount to a sum of about sixty florins, showing that we shall not be able to make any important acquisitions out of our funds.

You may now hand over this cantata to the library of the Singing Society. I would only ask you to send me back the pianoforte score after the concert has taken place.

I offer myself for the bass solo in the cantata, which, though not important, seems to be very interesting. It will, perhaps, give you some trouble to find two good sopranos. For the part of the violin obligato, which is extremely beautiful, Eichhorn will suit very well.

Now, good-bye, my dear Concert-master. Send me some account to Carlsbad of the rehearsals of Handel and Nencini. Ever yours sincerely, ALBERT.

To Queen Victoria.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 15th October 1839.¹

DEAREST, GREATLY BELOVED VICTORIA,—I am so touched by the mark of confidence which you give me by sending me your letters, and by the loving sentiments towards me which you express in them that I hardly know how to answer you. How is it that I have deserved so much love, so much affection? I cannot get used to the

¹ The day of the engagement.

reality of all that I see and hear, and have to believe that Heaven has sent me an angel whose brightness shall illumine my life. Oh, that I may succeed in making you very, very happy, as happy as you deserve to be. In body and soul ever your slave, your loyal, ALBERT.

To Baron von Stockmar.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 16th Oct. 1839. I write to you on one of the happiest days of my life, to give you the most welcome news possible. . . . Victoria is so good and kind to me that I am often at a loss to believe that such affection should be shown to me. I know the great interest you take in my happiness; so I can pour out my heart to you . . . More, or more seriously, I cannot write to you; for that, at this moment, I am too bewildered.

Das Auge sieht den Himmel offen,
Es schwimmt das Herz in Seligkeit.⁴

To Queen Victoria.

WINDSOR CASTLE, Sunday, 20th October 1839.

DEARLY LOVED VICTORIA, I send you my letters to Papa, Uncle Leopold and Stockmar, with the request that after looking well through them you will let me have them back again. I hope that you slept well last night. Ever and always your faithful, ALBERT.

On the same day.

DEARLY LOVED VICTORIA, I have just read Fr. Rückert's poems, and came upon a little sonnet which moved me deeply. I send it; perhaps it will please you. Your faithful, ALBERT.

Mir im Herzen vorgenommen,
Gott zu dienen, hab' ich nun,
Um dereinst zum Ort zu kommen,
Wo man soll in Freuden ruhn.

In den Schoen des Paradieses
Moecht' ich doch allein nicht gehn,
Koemt' ich freun mich, ohne dieses
Blonde Haupt bei mir zu sehn?

Nicht als ob ich Erdenluste
Suchen wollt in Himmelsblau,
Sondern weil's mich freuen mueste,
In der Glorie sie zu schaun.

⁴ Schiller's *Lied von der Glocke*, a poem of which the Prince was very fond, and knew mostly by heart.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

WINDSOR, 5th November 1839.

DEAR MAMA,—Apart from my relations with her (Victoria), my future position will have certain dark sides, and the skies above me will not always be blue and unclouded. Still, life, wherever one is, has its storms, and it is a support to one to feel that one has used all one's endeavours and strength in some great object, decisive for the welfare of so many.

To Baron von Stockmar.

WINDSOR, 9th November 1839.

DEAR BARON STOCKMAR,—A thousand thousand thanks for your dear, kind letter. I thought you would surely take much interest in an event which is so important for me, and which you yourself prepared.

Your prophecy is fulfilled. The event has come upon us by surprise, sooner than we could have expected ; and I now doubly regret that I have lost the last summer, which I might have employed in many useful preparations, in deference to the wishes of relations, and to the opposition of those who influenced the disposal of my life.

I have laid to heart your friendly and kind-hearted advice as to the true foundation on which my future happiness must rest, and it agrees entirely with the principles of action which I had already privately framed for myself. An individuality, a character, which shall win the respect, the love, and the confidence of the Queen and of the nation, must be the groundwork of my position. This individuality gives security for the disposition which prompts one's actions ; and even should mistakes occur, they will be more easily pardoned on account of that personal character : while even the most noble and beautiful undertakings fail in procuring support for a man who is not capable of inspiring that confidence.

If, therefore, I prove a "noble" Prince in the true sense of the word, as you call upon me to be, wise and prudent conduct will become easier to me, and its results more rich in blessings.

I will not let my courage fail. With firm resolution and true zeal on my part, I cannot fail to continue "noble, manly, and princely" in all things. In what I may do, good advice is the first

thing necessary ; and that, you can give better than any one, if you can only make up your mind to sacrifice your time to me for the first year of my life here.

I have still much to say to you, but must conclude, as the courier cannot wait longer. I hope, however, to discuss the subject more fully with you by word of mouth at Wiesbaden. Hoping that I shall there find you well and hearty, I remain, yours truly, ALBERT.

To Duchess Caroline of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg.

WINDSOR, 11th November 1839.

DEAR GRANDMAMA, — I tremble as I take up my pen, for I cannot but fear that what I am about to tell you will at the same time raise a thought which cannot be otherwise than painful to you, and oh ! which is very much so to me also, namely, that of parting. The subject which has occupied us so much of late is at last settled.

The Queen sent for me alone to her room a few days ago, and declared to me in a genuine outburst of love and affection, that I had gained her whole heart, and would make her intensely happy if I would make her the sacrifice of sharing her life with her, for she said she looked on it as a sacrifice ; the only thing which troubled her was that she did not think she was worthy of me. The joyous openness of manner in which she told me this quite enchanted me, and I was quite carried away by it. She is really most good and amiable, and I am quite sure heaven has not given me into evil hands, and that we shall be happy together.

Since that moment Victoria does whatever she fancies I should wish or like, and we talk together a great deal about our future life, which she promises me to make as happy as possible. Oh, the future ! does it not bring with it the moment when I shall have to take leave of my dear, dear home, and of you !

I cannot think of that without deep melancholy taking possession of me.

It was on the 15th October that Victoria made me this declaration, and I have hitherto shrunk from telling you ; but how does delay make it better ?

The period of our marriage is already close at hand. The Queen and the Ministers wish exceedingly that it should take place in the first days of February, in which I acquiesced after hearing their reasons for it.

We have therefore fixed our departure for the 14th inst., so as to have still as much time as possible at home. We shall therefore follow close upon this letter.

My position here will be very pleasant, inasmuch as I have refused all the offered titles. I keep my own name, and remain what I was. This will make me very independent, and it will be easy for me to run over occasionally to see all my dear relations.

But it is very painful to know that there will be the sea between us.

I now take leave of you again. Victoria is writing to you herself to tell you all she wishes.

I ask you to give me your grandmotherly blessing in this important and decisive step in my life ; it will be a talisman to me against all the storms the future may have in store for me.

Good-bye, dear Grandmama, and do not take your love from me.

Heaven will make all things right. Always and ever, your devoted grandson, ALBERT.

May I beg of you to keep the news a secret till the end of the month, as it will only then be made known here.

To Queen Victoria.

CALAIS, 15th November 1839.

DEAREST, DEEPLY LOVED VICTORIA,—According to your wish, and by the urging of my heart to talk to you and open my heart to you, I send these lines. We arrived safely at Calais, and Lord Alfred Paget is to re-cross in a quarter of an hour, and will arrive at Windsor early to-morrow. The state of the tide and strong wind forced us to start across at 2.30 in the morning, and we reached here at about 6 o'clock. Even then the *Firebrand* could not approach the quay, so that we decided to go ashore in a smaller boat. We both, Schenk, and all the servants were fearfully ill ; I have hardly recovered yet. I need not tell you that since we left, all my thoughts have been with you at Windsor, and your image fills my whole soul. Even in my dreams I never imagined that I should find so much love on earth. How that moment shines for me when I was close to you, with your hand in mine ! Those days flew by so quickly, but our separation will fly equally so. Ernest wishes me to say a thousand nice things to you. With promises of unchanging love and devotion, your ever true, ALBERT.

My best respects to the aunt and Baroness Lehzen.

To the Same.

BRUSSELS, 17th November 1839.

DEAR, BELOVED VICTORIA, I write to-day from Brussels, whence we depart in a few hours. Unluckily the courier has not come yet, and probably will not do so till late in the afternoon, so that I must renounce the great, great joy of hearing from you here. How happy I shall be when my eyes fall on your dear hand-writing again. I have given orders that a courier shall be sent on to us at once with your letter, and I trust it will catch up with us at Bonn. Since my last letter to you, we reached Ostend, and yesterday morning we travelled here by train and arrived at 11 o'clock. We are lodged, as you rightly expected, not at Lacken, but in Brussels. Directly after our arrival we drove at once to the dear aunt, whom I found looking wonderfully well, and on the whole in very good spirits. You may well imagine, dearest Victoria, that Windsor and you were the sole subjects of our talk. The aunt loves you so much, and that makes her doubly dear to me.

On returning, we were visited by the Minister, de Theux, who with much ceremony presented us both with the Belgian Order in the name of our uncle ; Alvensleben received the Cross of a Commander of the Order, a distinction which he has fully earned. In the evening there was a Banquet at Lacken.

The excellent Seymour, whom I have sent for here, has not arrived yet, and must follow on so as to catch us at Bonn or Weisbaden. We shall spend three days on the road to Wiesbaden in order not to tire Ernest too much, but we must not let him observe this. We sleep to-night at Aix la Chapelle, and to-morrow at Bonn, where the day after we mean to give a great luncheon for one of the professors, who was our old tutor. According to the news here, Papa will have arrived at Wiesbaden yesterday ; so it seems that the morning of the 20th will see the whole family gathered together.

I shall send you a report of our doings from there. Ernest, who is still asleep, it being 5 o'clock in the morning, wishes to send messages, I am sure, and will praise me, when he wakes, for having done so. It is always nice to earn praise, to myself all the more, since I so seldom get it.

Fare-well, dearest Victoria, I kiss you a thousand times. Leave a little room in your heart for your faithful ALBERT.

My respects to the Baroness.

To Queen Victoria.

WIESBADEN, 21st November 1839.

DEARLY BELOVED VICTORIA,—How you have charmed me with your very dear letter of the 14th, which I received at Bonn by the courier when passing through. Such warm, deep feeling is expressed in your lines that I cannot read them without emotion. I cannot imagine how it is that I am the object of so much love and affection. To myself I seem too ordinary, too much lacking in merit, to be enjoying such fortune. For to know that you are so kind to me makes me too happy. I can only imagine you on the 14th in your little blue sitting-room feeling rather lonely ; we were so happy sitting together there on the little sofa. How I would like to be there by magic to cheer your loneliness. I have these days been distracted by fresh places, fresh conditions, memories, people, events, and yet none of them can smother the painful feeling of separation.

We found dear Uncle Leopold in very good health and spirits. From his looks I do not think his condition in any way dangerous. Papa is here ; we are living with him, and talk much of the dear, good Victoria. I discussed with the Uncle the affair of the Peerage, and also a number of other matters which affect my future, all very important and interesting. As regards the first of them he suggested to me many reasons in favour of it, which we did not think of at Windsor ; at the same time there is much to be argued against it. I think we shall do best to leave the matter severely alone. When I come to England life will show what is necessary. It needs but the stroke of your pen to make me a peer and to give me an English name. . . .

We shall be another two days at Wiesbaden, and on the 23rd make for home. The uncle stays on till the 27th. Karl is no longer here.

Now I must say good-bye to you again. May heaven pour its best blessings on you, dearest Victoria. That is the prayer of, your deeply loving, ALBERT.

P.S.—It is right of you to announce your engagement to the English family now. I, as well as you, am anxious to see their replies. Uncle considers that it would be a much stronger measure [sic] than if you had it published in the newspapers.

I send you a trifle which came to me here and appealed to me on account of its sentiment. May you think with love of your faithful Albert when you take it into your hand. Ernest adds some verses which the occasion elicited from him. My respects to the Baroness Lehzen.

To the Duchess of Kent.

WIESBADEN, 21st November 1839.

DEAREST AUNT,—A thousand thanks for your two dear letters, just received! I see from them that you are in close sympathy with your nephew—your son-in-law soon to be—which gratifies me very, very much. All you say strikes me as very true, and as emanating from a heart as wise as it is kind. I regret, as you do, that I have not still some months at command, to prepare myself for my new position—a position new to me in so many ways; yet what little time I have shall not fail to be turned to account, if they will allow me a moment's leisure in Coburg from other matters.

What you say about my poor little Bride sitting all alone in her room, silent and sad, has touched me to the heart. Oh, that I might fly to her side to cheer her!

You wish me to give you something I have worn. I send you the ring which you gave me at Kensington on Victoria's birthday in 1836. From that time it has never left my finger. Its very shape proclaims that it has been squeezed in the grasp of many a manly hand. It has your name upon it: but the name is Victoria's too, and I beg you to wear it in remembrance of her and of myself.

Our stay in Wiesbaden will be brief, for we expect to start for home the day after to-morrow. We stayed for a couple of hours in Bonn, visited our little old home there, and then gave a *déjeuner* to our old tutors, who received us with great cordiality.

Now farewell, dearest Aunt, and continue your love for your devoted nephew, ALBERT.

To Queen Victoria.

COBURG, 30th November 1839.

DEARLY BELOVED VICTORIA,—I long to talk to you; otherwise the separation is too painful. Your dear picture stands on my table in front of me, and I can hardly take my eyes off it. I can sometimes imagine you are answering me, and this thought makes me

most happy. Perhaps you think of me when my thoughts are with you.

You receive these lines from dear old Coburg, where I have been received with all possible cordiality. All are on the tiptoe of curiosity, anxious to know, and yet not daring to ask, and I am cruel enough to say nothing. This state of uncertainty, however, will not continue long. The next newspaper will probably bring the news of your declaration to the Privy Council, and then there will be a general outburst of joy among the people here.

My poor dear grandmama is greatly touched by your letter. She is sadly depressed at the thought of parting from me. She says that since my mother's death she has not wept so much as in these last days ; still she hopes, what I am convinced will be the case, that I may find in you, my dear Victoria, all the happiness I could possibly desire. And *so I shall*, I can truly tell her for her comfort.

Thinking of you makes me so happy—what a delight it must be to walk through the whole of my life, with its joys and storms, with you at my side ! Where love is, there is happiness. Love of you fills my whole heart.

Ernest will remain with us a few more days. He goes the day after to-morrow to Dresden and will come back to us at the New Year. We saw Charles that last evening at Wiesbaden ; he wants to come here on the 9th for a few days, and then to go on to Munich, to spend the winter speaking in the Bavarian Chamber. Now I am plagued with packing, making arrangements, giving orders, etc. But when Stockmar, who is to be here about 3, arrives, I shall at once set to work to make a thorough study of the *Blackstone* you have so kindly sent me.¹ We expect Seymour here to-day, whom we missed at Brussels.

May I remind you of the presents we both intended to give together to Lehzen, Melbourne and Stockmar ? Be so kind, dear, splendid Victoria, to remember me to the aunt, to whom I cannot write to-day, and to the Baronesses. I should have written in English, but German runs more easily with me, and as we always spoke in German together during that heavenly time together at Windsor, it does not sound right to me at all to address you in English. So a good hearty good-bye in German ! Think sometimes

¹ Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765-9), the classic work on English jurisprudence.

with love of your Albert, whose heart beats truly and honourably for you, and whose dearest wish is that your love may continue. Ever and always your faithful, ALBERT.

I had closed my letter and was about to send it off, when Seymour arrived last night and handed me your dear, dear, loving letter. How happy your words make me! Such an intimate outpouring from your warm heart, your tenderness. I have to read it again and again, to see in your own words what I so love to see—that you love me.

I have no words to express my feelings about you, however much I try to look for them. It will be splendid if you write me a few words every day, and I cannot thank you enough. Though so far from you, I can then live each day with you, since I shall know all you are doing. I would do the same, though I hardly think that life at Coburg would interest you sufficiently, as you don't know anybody here. The attempt to waltz, and the two Pagets tied together must really have been excruciatingly funny. I have read through with great interest the letters received from your family. I think most of them are making *bonne mine à mauvais jeu*. But at any rate the letters are very nice and flattering to me, and this is so unmerited that it almost looks like making fun of me. The Duchess of Gloucester writes most courteously to me; I mean to answer her to-day, but am rather embarrassed and uncertain whether to address her as Royal Highness, Dear Duchess, Aunt, or what.

Here we live for the sport which goes on every day; yesterday we had a most lively ball. We had the Regatta Gallop. I could not join in it; the sound of it transported me to Windsor, and in my thoughts I was with you, leaning against the long mirror, or flying with you through that lovely ball-room. These happy hours will, I hope, soon return. Good-bye. I kiss you a thousand times. May Heaven bless you!

1st Dec.—I am like Don Basilio in the "Barbiere," and after each farewell begin all over again. My grandmother writes, delighted with the lovely bracelet she has just received, and begs me to lay her thanks at your feet.

I should like to say that you would do me the greatest pleasure if you would wait a little longer till I come back to you, before choosing the gentlemen who are to form my future Household; since it is very important in such a relationship that I should suit them and they

should suit me, and that both sides should inspire confidence in the other.

I enclose a copy of a portrait done of me in my eighth year, since you desired to possess one. It is said to have been very like me. Now seriously, good-bye dear, dear Victoria.

To Prince William of Löwenstein.

COBURG, 6th Dec. 1839.—Although I am overwhelmed by a mass of business and work of all sorts, I must find a few minutes in order to give you, my faithful friend, the news of my happiness direct from myself.

Yes—I am actually an engaged man! and about the 4th of February hope to see myself united to her I love!

You know how matters stood when I last saw you here. After that the sky was darkened more and more. The Queen declared to my uncle of Belgium, that she wished the affair to be considered as broken off, and that for four years she could think of no marriage. I went therefore with the quiet but firm resolution to declare, on my part, that I also, tired of the delay, withdrew entirely from the affair. It was not, however, thus ordained by Providence; for on the second day after our arrival, the most friendly demonstrations were directed towards me, and two days later I was secretly called to a private audience, in which the Queen offered me her hand and heart. The strictest secrecy was required. Ernest alone knew of it, and it was only at our departure that I could communicate my engagement to the Queen's mother.

I think I shall be *very* happy, for Victoria possesses all the qualities which make a home happy, and seems to be attached to me with her whole heart.

My future lot is high and brilliant, but also plentifully strewed with thorns. Struggles will not be wanting, and the month of March already appears to have storms in store.

The separation from my native country—from dear Coburg—from so many friends, is very painful to me! When shall I see you again, dear Löwenstein?

Pray show no one this letter. I write you these details, relying upon your silence, for I know your friendship for me. Now good-bye, and think sometimes of your ALBERT.

To the Duchess of Kent.

COBURG, 6th December 1839.

DEAREST AUNT, —Accept my most hearty thanks for your dear note, which convinces me that I am still often in your thoughts. What a multitude of emotions of the most diverse kind sweeps over and overwhelms me—hope, love for dear Victoria, the pain of leaving home, the parting from very dear kindred, the entrance into a new circle of relations, all meeting me with the utmost kindness, prospects most brilliant, the dread of being unequal to my position, the demonstrations of so much attachment on the part of the loyal Coburgers, [English enthusiasm on the tip-toe of expectation¹] the multiplicity of duties to be fulfilled, and to crown all, so much laudation on every side that I could sink to the earth with very shame. I am lost in bewilderment. I pack, arrange, give directions about pieces of property, settle contracts, engage servants, write an infinitude of letters, study the English Constitution, and occupy myself about my future.

Ernest has left me and gone to Dresden. I shall not see him at Coburg again.

Everything is deep in snow, and I am tormented with a heavy cold. Forgive me, dearest Aunt, if what I write be rather confused. Just at present I am in that state myself. Not to weary you more, I take my leave, and remain, your devoted nephew, ALBERT.

To Queen Victoria.

COBURG, 7th Dec. 1839. —I received your letter of the 21st-23rd² with extreme joy and much gratitude. So the secret is out, the affair made public, and to all appearance generally received with great satisfaction. This is a good omen for us. Here it has been no easy matter for some days back to keep the secret, and it is well we need do so no longer. That people everywhere entertain so good an opinion of me is not pleasant, for it fills me with uneasiness and apprehension, that when I make my appearance they will be bitterly undeceived not to find me what they expected.

How often are my thoughts with you! The hours I was privileged to pass with you in your dear little room are the radiant points of my

¹ Omitted by the German editor.

² See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, pp. 247-9.

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¹ Omitted by the German editor.

² See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, pp. 247-9.

life, and I cannot even yet clearly picture to myself that I am to be indeed so happy as to be always near you, always your protector.

It gives me great pleasure that you intend soon to send me the Garter. I should like to have the uniform also, as I think it very essential to try it on and have it fitted here, so that when I come to England I am not made ridiculous by a badly fitting uniform, as I was the last time owing to having the wrong kind of hat. Also, supposing I have not the Patent and uniform by me here as I was given to expect, I shall have to be equipped afresh in Coburg uniform, since I left my better things in London as a pattern for the tailor, and there will not be time.

You wish a Declaration to be made here, to be sent to you at once. For this purpose a ceremony is ordered for to-morrow, as follows : In the morning the whole Court goes in full dress to hear the Word of God ; then it assembles in the Throne Room along with the members of the Chamber, Delegates from the towns, chiefs of Colleges, the Army, the Clergy, etc., and, before Papa and myself, Minister von Carlowitz (after the Saxon custom, the Ruler never speaking in person) will read the Declaration, which will then be printed and sent throughout the country in a special newspaper issue. Then a Court for congratulations (much the same as a Drawing Room) will be held, and then a state Banquet. I am attaching to this letter the Declaration translated into English.

In accordance with your wish, we have set about the preparation of an historical sketch of the progenitors of our House, so as to show at once their position towards the Reformation and Protestantism. It is not yet complete, but it shall be sent with my next letter. It demonstrates that to the House of Saxony Protestantism, in a measure, owes its existence, for this House and that of the Landgrave of Hesse stood quite alone against Europe, and upheld Luther and his cause triumphantly. This shows the folly of constantly assailing our House as Papistical. So little is this the case, that there has not been a single Catholic Princess introduced into the Coburg family since the appearance of Luther in 1521. Moreover, the Elector, Frederick the Wise of Saxony, was the very first Protestant that ever lived. That you may know and judge for yourself, dear Victoria, what my creed and religious principles are, I send you a confession of faith which I worked out for myself in 1835, and which I then publicly avowed and swore to in our High Church. I enclose an English copy, and

the original as I then wrote it. You will see my hand is somewhat changed since then.

I do not think the Ministry is taking a correct view as regards the regulations in England concerning the Saxe-Coburg succession.¹ It stands actually as follows : my eldest son—should I have one—without any question whatever, as a male descendant of the House of Coburg *ex pacto et providentia majorum*, has the right of succession to the property and government of the Saxon lands ; unless by special provision, no one can contest this with him. Now it cannot be to the interest of England that the Prince of Wales or the King should at the same time be a German Duke. To take the instance of Hanover, this would be the case, and the King might perhaps send his brother here as Vice-Duke, since he cannot be in two places at the same time ; and this would be a great misfortune for this country, which lives solely on the Ducal family. Therefore it will be to the best interests of both countries that the King of England should renounce the Coburg succession in favour of a younger brother, who thereby enters upon an agreeable life. The decision could be promulgated by Papa, as Head of the House, and be inserted in a clause in our marriage contract. If it was settled in this way, it ought to please the English that provision has been made that a future King shall not be involved in German affairs ; they have never much liked this. It might be well to have these considerations translated into English and handed to Lord Melbourne.²

I must be a great bore to you, poor Victoria, with my long, dull letter ; but I haven't come to the end of it yet, and must begin again on another point.

You write : "For me we require no contract of marriage,"³ (I see that point perfectly) "but if you require anything to be settled, the best will be to send it here." Being so situated, I will obey your commands, and send by my next letter the points which I am considering. From my point of view it is very desirable that a treaty should define the concessions that are being made to me, since later on perhaps they might in some way be questioned by Parliament,

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 248.

² In the event, Ernest II, who died childless, was succeeded by Albert's son, Alfred. He, having died without a son in 1900, was succeeded by the son of Albert's fourth son, Leopold, as Duke Charles Edward—until 1918.

³ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 248.

whilst matters affecting me, once they are in a treaty, are quite *hors de combat*.

I hear from Brussels that letters from you have arrived there, to be brought on here by a courier. I rejoice, dear, to hear from you. I shall give him the papers I promised when he goes back. Your account of the Privy Council and of the popular enthusiasm¹ has interested me very much. I have answered the aunt and the princesses and enclose the letters. A nice message for Baroness Lehzen.

Now I must give you a parting kiss, embrace you once more; another look and good-bye. Farewell, dear, dear Victoria, and don't let your love cool for your faithful, ALBERT.

P.S.—The picture I painted for you leaves to-day.

To the Same.

COBURG, 10th December 1839.

MY DEAREST, BELOVED VICTORIA,—I received your dear, dear lines of the 25th and 26th¹ yesterday. They are so full of affection for me, and make me therefore intensely happy. You say you fear to tire me with your letters—how could you think such a thing? Whilst we are separated is it not my sole comfort to talk to you, and hear from you? The letters from Charles and Uncle Mensdorff have greatly interested me; I am sending them back with this letter. Charles arrived here yesterday and stays a few days. He says that this marriage has been the dearest wish of himself and his wife, and praises me very much for it. (Anyone who thinks that will go to heaven!) The article in the *Globe*² is a delightful one, but so disgustingly flattering as to make me feel quite uncomfortable.

Two days ago we held the great Declaration ceremony here, which went off really brilliantly and well. I send the account of it from the Court Circular (*Hofzeremonial*). The day affected me much, so many emotions of every kind possessed me. Your health was drunk at the dinner, at which 300 persons were present, with a general chorus of cheers. The popular joy was so great that guns and pistols were fired off in the streets all the night through till the next morning, so continuously that one might almost imagine a battle was in progress.

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 248.

² See Grey, *Early Years*, pp. 247-9.

On the night of the 8th I had a high fever owing to a cold caught in the church and the day before while shooting. It kept on throughout the whole day, but to-day it is much better, though I feel rather weak and pulled down.

I received your dear loving letter of the 27th to 29th.¹ I am delighted that my letter from Wiesbaden finally reached you on the 28th, and that Ernest's little poem about the orange blossom pleased you. I will send the letter to Ernest on to him at Dresden.

I can understand your being indignant with the Tories, for their grumbling and abuse is unbelievable. I am sorry for poor Lord Melbourne having to listen to and bear so much that is hard and unfriendly ; still, it need not trouble you as Queen, except for your friendship for the good Lord Melbourne. Otherwise a constitutional sovereign may be indifferent to what is said against his Ministry. They are so unjust to Lord Melbourne, and the attack on the Declaration on account of the omission of the "Protestant" clause is ridiculous.²

As regards my peerage and the fears of my playing a political part, dear, beloved Victoria, I have only one anxious wish and one prayer : do not allow it to become a matter of worry to you. Let the papers and the people, whoever they may be, be as angry with me as they like ; only do not let it cause you to mistrust my love, my honesty and frankness to you. That would distress me deeply. Believe me, I shall give you no cause for mistrust or suspicion ; only promise me that the empty, suspicious gossip of others will never influence you in the slightest. Examine whether I am worthy of your trust ; once you believe this, you need never allow yourself to be led astray.

Now I come to a second point which you touch upon in your letter, and which I have also much at heart ; I mean the choice of the persons who are to belong to my household. The maxim, "Tell me whom he associates with, and I will tell you what manner of man he is," must here especially not be lost sight of. I should wish particularly that the selection should be made without regard to politics ; for if I am really to keep myself free from all parties, my people must not belong exclusively to one side. Above all, these appointments

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, pp. 251-3.

² This omission was seized hold of by the Opposition, and led to reports that the Prince was a Roman Catholic, or even a radical or infidel.

should not be mere "party rewards," but they should possess other recommendations besides those of party. Let them be either of very high rank, or very rich, or very clever, or persons who have performed important services for England. It is very necessary that they should be chosen from both sides—the same number of Whigs as of Tories ; and above all do I wish that they should be well-educated men and of high character, who, as I have already said, shall have already distinguished themselves in their several positions, whether it be in the army, or navy, or in the scientific world. I know you will agree in my views, and you would do me a great service, if you would have them translated into English and communicated to Lord Melbourne, so that he may learn my point of view on this matter.

It is very good news to me that the aunt¹ at last realises her position, and is thinking of leaving her house, and, more important still, of appointing another gentleman.² It will certainly be for her good, and ensure her a suitable position once again. Uncle Leopold writes that he is prepared to sacrifice himself and invite her to Brussels after our wedding.

I shall be very pleased to grant the request of the good Brown,³ for he is a nice man and should be a good doctor.

Papa wishes to be recommended to your favour, my grandmother is delighted with her bracelet, Mama sighs for hers. Papa has charged me with something else. He is having the Star of the Garter made in diamonds, but cannot at short notice discover a small cut onyx suitable for the Garter ; and he asks me to enquire whether you could possibly obtain one for him in England.

I venture, now that Christmas is at the door, to enclose a small bracelet for you, begging you to think not of the object, but of the feelings of love and attachment it dedicates to you. If I could but find words to tell you how warmly my heart beats for you, how my life is only valuable by the thought that it exists for you. May God pour His best blessings upon you, is the prayer of your faithful, ALBERT.

I enclose the promised points for the marriage Treaty.

¹ Duchess of Kent. See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 361.

² To succeed Sir John Conroy whom the Queen much disliked, but without reason.

³ Dr. Brown, of Windsor, physician to the Duchess of Kent. He attended the Prince Consort in his last illness.

To Queen Victoria.

Coburg, 13th December 1839.

VERY DEAR VICTORIA,—How it rejoices me to receive a letter from you. Yesterday the good Seymour brought me your dear lines of the 30th, which charmed me afresh. I hope your dream will soon come true, and that our lips will blossom afresh when they have touched each other. How my heart longs for that. You are lucky in being able to dream. If it happens to me for long together, it becomes one of the most wearisome things in the world, and I am glad when it is over.

Yesterday we had a grand Concert of our singing society, attended by 150 persons, mostly of good society. Mama, a Countess Rottenhan, Herr von Pöllnitz and I took the solo parts. We performed, I may say, with much success, an overture by Späth, Beethoven's Cantata, *The Praise of Music*, Nencini's *Agnus Dei*, and M. Haydn's *Miserere*.

It delights me that you sometimes sing my songs. I will see if I can set Ernest's verses to music for you. It will not be easy, for it is mostly narrative, and in composition recitative alone is suitable for narrative, and the words are hardly thrilling enough for a ballad. Bulwer's two poems are really very good and so full of deep feeling. Your saying, "It expresses just what I feel for you," overjoys me.

I am quite well again. I cannot be really ill, for I have no time for it, owing to the boring trifles which overwhelm me.

Now I must say good-bye. In the hope that these lines will reach you, I remain, your faithful, ALBERT.

To the Same.

Coburg, 15th December 1839.

DEAR, BELOVED VICTORIA.—A thousand, thousand thanks for your dear lines of the 3rd, which came just after my last letter left. You are right—we are too far apart; it makes free correspondence difficult; for one has to wait too long for the answers, and I at least await them with longing. It makes me too happy when I hear from you, and your letters are so sweet, so full of affection and love. I reproach myself so often, because compared with yours my letters are so cold and stiff, and yet I shrink from boring you with my outpourings.

To-day at last I am able to send you a complete historical account of my ancestors and their connection with the Reformation and the Protestant movement. I hope it will interest you. Schenk has turned it into English. Stockmar is sending a German version to Murray, who speaks German well and also takes an interest in German subjects.

[The following passage was written in English by the Prince :]

As for your proposition concerning Mr. Anson, I confess to have my doubts. I am quite sure that he must be an intelligent and a strictly honest man, else he would not be Secretary to Lord Melbourne. But to take a man for a confidential servant is another thing, this requires confidence, and confidence grows only out of time, selfobservation and trial. It is my nature, dearest beloved Victoria, to trust only upon a thorough knowledge and self-conviction of a person's worthiness, and I must acknowledge that I feel unwilling to deviate in an important point from a maxim, congenial with my character. Besides that I know personally nothing of Mr. Anson, except that I have seen him dance a Quadrille. I give you to consider, dearest love, if my taking the secretary of the Prime Minister as Treasurer would not from the beginning make me a partisan in the eyes of many? As my privy purse cannot have so much to do, I hope that Schenk, whom as you know I have already appointed, will be quite adequate to the bussiness. If the name Treasurer should give offence in any way, I am quite ready to call him Privypurse, Comptroller, Subtreasurer, Secretary or anything. To conclude I hope you will, dearest Victoria, agree with me, that all these appointments are in no way so urging, and that it will in every way be more safe for you and myself not to make more than absolutely necessary, and rather to put off the rest, till I am on the spot.

I feel sure you will realise the truth and necessity of my remarks. I am thoroughly touched at Lord Melbourne giving himself so much trouble on my account, for he cannot have much time to give to it; and to you I am very grateful for your loving care on my behalf. Though I am beginning to come to the end of my arrangements, I still have a fearful lot to do, for I am pestered by a crowd of people who want to be or get something.

Yesterday we had a really lovely Ball lasting until four in the morning; as a result I am feeling rather sleepy to-day. I have

made a start at setting the poem to music, but I shall find it most difficult. Charles Leiningen, who is here, sends you many nice messages.

Now good-bye, best and dearest Victoria, and let your dear heart think of me sometimes, for that is the greatest happiness for your faithful, ALBERT.

To Queen Victoria.

COBURG, 18th December 1839.

DEAR, BELOVED VICTORIA, I hasten to reply to your dear letter received yesterday, and to thank you for all the love speaking to me through it. Every word from you makes me so happy, and when that word is "I love you," you can imagine how it charms me. I hope that you are receiving letters from me more regularly now; the last long gap of which you complain was at the moment of our journey here from Wiesbaden, and the first few days here when everything was in confusion.

I am very sorry that you have not been able to grant my first request, the one about the gentlemen of my Household, for I know it was not an unfair one, for you yourself say, "Your people are appointed by you and not by me,"¹ and I was justified in hoping you might do me a favour in the matter which touches me so nearly. However, if you choose them for me, that alone shall make me value them. Still, it must be difficult for a lady, in a society as large as that of London, to get to know gentlemen as well as is necessary in making such a choice. But these gentlemen, as you say, "will not be in continual attendance" on me, and that too makes a difference. Given that they are of no political party, not too young, but sensible, steady, useful people, as you say, then I am very, very grateful to you. But I must get to know my confidential servants intimately beforehand, and that is why I am against the appointment of Mr. Anson as Treasurer. Think of my position, dear Victoria. I am leaving my home with all its old associations, all my bosom friends, and going to a country in which everything is new and strange to me—men, language, customs, modes of life, position. Except yourself, I have no one to confide in. And is it not even to be conceded to me that the two or three persons, who

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 254.

are to have the charge of my private affairs, shall be persons who already command my confidence ?

Your news of the marriage between Lord Palmerston and Lady Cowper¹ amuses me ; she must be an old flame. By your reckoning they together make up a century ; but they are quite right, and I am delighted whenever I hear of a marriage, for I always imagine the people must be as happy as I am. I should love to see you waltzing with your Maids of Honour, and am sure you are improving quickly. The music programme (Zettel) amused me very much. I can understand your being angry with the Tories, but I cannot imagine how you can get even with them. Shakespeare, of course, said, " Revenge is sweet," but that would not be in keeping with your dear blue eyes. Please don't think you bore me when you write me all your feelings, as they come upon you. To me it is a great proof of your love, and it does one so much good to be able to confide in a friend.

I cannot understand where the bust² can be lying ; I almost fear some Customs House is holding it up. . . .

I have only a week more in dear old Coburg, and then I must bid it farewell ; it will be hard. We stay for a month at Gotha, where Ernest comes to us again. Charles leaves to-morrow, but comes with his wife to Gotha. Prince and Princess Reuss will be there also, and perhaps Uncle Ferdinand and Victoire.³ Then to you, and a new era of my life begins.

I enclose the pedigree, which was missing from Dr. Praetor's historical sketch of the family. To-night there is a great final Ball, given for me by the whole of society here. For the days following we shall live quite quietly and privately, for we mean to go to Communion on the 23rd. Now I must say farewell. God's best blessings on you ! Ever and always your faithful,

ALBERT.

It is a very good thing that Stockmar is going to England about the Treaty, sorry though I am to lose him. We have been working well together, burrowing through *Blackstone*. Be so kind as to thank the excellent Lord Melbourne sincerely for me for taking so

¹ Sister of Lord Melbourne.

² King Leopold was sending Princess Charlotte's bust to the Queen at Windsor. See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 259.

³ Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg and his daughter, who married the Duc de Nemours in 1840.

much trouble over my affairs. I shall write to him in a day or two. Papa is close by me, and sends you many messages. . . .

To Queen Victoria.

COBURG, 22nd December 1839.

DEAR, BELOVED VICTORIA,—I have another dear letter from you of the 11th—13th, for which I thank you from my heart. I cannot understand how you have failed to hear from me for some time, for I write fairly regularly. On the 12th you wrote that you had no time to write to me ; you could only say you loved me unspeakably. To me that is as if you had written a work of twelve volumes ! Please repeat that ; it does me so much good to hear it from you. You can't think how much ! I feel to-day particularly depressed and religious (*heiliggestimmt*). In an hour we go to receive the Sacrament in the Church. God will not be angry with me if, during that service I think of you even at the Altar, for I shall pray for you and the salvation of your soul, and He will not withhold His blessing from us.

I received a letter yesterday from Uncle Leopold, complaining much about his health, I am sorry to say. Think of it ! Uncle Ferdinand and August have never answered the letters I wrote them from Windsor. I approve the salaries suggested for my future equerries. But I beg you once more from the heart that, since these gentlemen are all getting very respectable salaries, you will work together with me to ensure appointment only of men who command respect, and are distinguished in rank and education, personal merits and character. . . .

Above all I strongly approve of your method of writing to me in English when you feel you must express yourself very clearly, and I beg you to continue your habit of writing partly in German and partly in English, a method which I shall likewise follow, and by which we shall not only be enabled to understand each other fully, but by which also my dearest Victoria will become the most amiable and useful language master I can possibly have.

I agree fully with the plan regarding the equerries, and am glad to see from your letter that you have at last fulfilled my desire and appointed no one so far besides Seymour and Mr. George Anson. Accept my thanks for this. So should it ever be, dearest Victoria, one heart, one mind.

Charles is living entirely with us ; he goes with us to Gotha and stays there with his wife till we go to England. He seems to take quite naturally his not going to our wedding. I think he means then to go to Munich. I enclose a letter from him. I am very glad the Garter is coming so soon, though it might have been better if you had sent it by an Envoy ; that is the general rule, and Papa is justifiably anxious lest our neighbours—specially those in Berlin—may put it down as a slight to him. The cost would not have frightened us, since the Court is so organised as to be able to receive a Mission at any moment.

I remind you again of the bracelet for Mama, as I was afraid that it might cause a little friction with Grandmama, for the public might say—how is it that the Duchess of Gotha has been given the portrait, and not the Duchess of Coburg, who after all is the Prince's mother ? Stockmar is ready to start ; it seems to me that a good portrait of you and me would give him more pleasure than any other present. . . .

Now farewell, dear, splendid Victoria ; look after your health (one ought not to say that, but I dare do so) so that we may both be well when we meet, and may your dear heart be my dwelling place ; mine is open to you. Papa and Mama send you messages. My respects to Baroness Lehzen. Unchanging and always your faithful, ALBERT.

To Queen Victoria.

GOTHA, 28th December 1839.

DEAR, BELOVED VICTORIA,—Your dear letter of the 14th—17th lies before me, and I can scarcely tear my eyes away from it to write to you, for the letter expresses what makes me most happy—that you love me. Accept my most heart-felt thanks. The little pin is lovely. I put it on at once to the admiration of all.

These last days have been very trying and painful for me. The day before yesterday I bade adieu to dear old Coburg ; now it lies behind me, and we have arrived at Gotha. The extraordinary kindness everywhere shown me on my leaving increased the emotion I could not but feel at taking leave. There was quite a stream of people from all quarters to the palace, the last days I was there, to get another look at me ; not a village but must send its delegate to town to express to myself the interest taken by the community in the

coming event. I am usually (alas !) of a rather cold nature, and it needs a pretty strong appeal to move me, but to see so many eyes filled with tears was too much for me. Here I have been received with a grand illumination, and a torchlight procession of the civic body.

Allow me, dear bride, to wish you from the bottom of my heart happiness for the New Year. May the year '40, so important to both of us, give you all the blessings that you and, I for you, could desire, and may you in our future married life find the heaven which I would so gladly make for you on earth. May God bless it. I add a little New Year's token, as is the custom in Germany.

I return Sir William Woods's memorandum ; it pleased and interested me very much to see in your letter that you will be willing to bear my arms. Sir W. Woods cannot have properly understood the question which was put to him, for his paper says nothing about the arms I am to bear, but deals solely with the question whether or not a Queen of England may bear her husband's arms, and demonstrates that she may certainly bear a sort of " alliance-coat," but the shields should be separate, and that of the husband should be on the right side. As for me, I may not bear an " alliance-coat," but, as I understand English heraldry, the English and Saxon arms will have to be quartered on one shield. I observe also that the design marked A is not with the rest of the documents. I beg you to have the matter enquired into. Sir W. Woods is uncertain also whether I may bear the wreath of rue only on the Saxon arms, or the large one combined. I can bear it just as well as the title which I put down for you at Windsor, that of Duke zu Sachsen.

Papa is extremely grateful for the lovely present that he has received from you, and charges me to lay his thanks at your feet.

I am so glad that you are walking a lot, as I see from your letter, dear Victoria, for I am sure it will do you good. I only wish I could be walking with you. You write that you are longing for me, and do not know how you can bear the separation. Oh ! it is the same with me. What cheers me up is music. I send you the song I composed at Windsor ; sing it and think of your Albert. I shall have finished the ballad of the orange flowers in a few days and shall send it directly it is ready.

The letters from Helen and Queen Adelaide have much interested me. Imagine what I have done ! I wrote to all your relations,

including even Uncle Ernest of Hanover, and when I was putting my papers in order at Coburg, I found my letter to Queen Adelaide had been forgotten ! I was and still am beside myself, since only yesterday I received a very friendly and gracious letter from the Queen, sent on to me by Grandmama. I enclose a letter for your aunt and beg you to make my excuses to her for having been guilty of such stupidity, so that she may not think a letter was not sent to her on purpose.

Papa, Mama and Grandmama all charge me to give you their best wishes for the New Year. . . . Now farewell, dear, splendid Victoria, and keep your love for your ever devoted, loving, ALBERT.

I have had a very sad letter from poor Uncle Leopold ; it seems that his health is worse again, and his doctors are very anxious.

To Queen Victoria.

GOTHIA, 31st December 1839.

DEAREST, BEST BELOVED VICTORIA,—Already another dear, dear letter from you which has wholly charmed me, for it once again tells me you love me, and proves that you love me truly and faithfully. You can confer on me no greater happiness. But why do you say you are unworthy ? I would allow no one in the world to say such a thing ; therefore I may not suffer it from you, for I cannot hear my dear good Victoria disparaged. I hope that in fear of me you will conceive a better opinion of yourself. You say that to you the whole thing seems to be merely a beautiful dream. It is no better with me. I cannot get it into my head that it is all real, though I trust that the moment when we meet again will thoroughly convince me.

I am very glad to hear that the points about the Coburg succession have been “very much liked” in England (as Lord Melbourne says). Here the arrangement will not be quite simple to make, but I consider it very essential. Prince and Princess Reuss with their daughter arrived here yesterday. We expect Ernest here this morning between nine and ten ; I shall be very glad to see him again.

You ask after good old Nus, and my faithful, but not disinterested Eos.¹ She is very well, looks after herself as much as she can,

¹ Eos was Albert's pet Italian greyhound, which he took with him to England ; she was buried later on in Windsor Park, with an effigy of her in bronze on her grave. Nus was presumably her mother.

sleeps by the stove, is very friendly if there is plum-cake in the room, very much put out when she has to jump over the stick, keen on hunting, sleepy after it, always proud, and contemptuous of other dogs.

I cannot tell you much, as nothing worth telling occurs to me. Oh yes ! there is something ; my song of the orange blossoms is finished, and what is more the modest young composer is delighted with it and says it is one of his most successful works, excellent, unsurpassed in melody and harmony ! In humblest devotion my insignificance ventures to lay at Your Majesty's feet the said work, the said incomparable work of a moment of youthful inspiration by the trembling undersigned. The composer has taken a great deal of trouble and hopes *que sa composition fera de l'effet et aura un peu de succès.* (This is modesty of a genius.)

The engagement of Grand-Duchess Olga and the Archduke Stephen is news to me. I do not know him, but Papa thinks highly of him. He must be very smart, which is not a recommendation in my eyes. The story about Ernest's jaundice is really too stupid. I cannot say how pleased I am that you are walking a lot. In this cold damp weather it is certainly the healthiest thing and will keep your feet warm. Do you remember how I warmed your dear little hands every day in the lovely little blue room ? In quiet hours I live on such memories. Good, dear, charming Victoria, in my thoughts I am very much with you.

Now I must say good-bye again. Messages to Baroness Lehzen. Good-bye and be still the loving friend of your faithful, ALBERT.

To the Same.

GOTHA, 3rd January 1840.

DEAREST, WELL-BELOVED VICTORIA, Receive my heart-felt thanks for your last dear letter of the 20th-23rd. Whatever they contain, I always value your letters intensely, for they come from your dear hand, and the spirit of love breathing in them ennobles and uplifts everything. This time, however, it contained a passage about Mr. Anson which distressed me, for it stirs up a difference of opinion between us two, who ought always to be one soul and one will. Dearest Victoria, when I see anything that may be of service or be needful to you, I shall not be afraid of any sacrifice to obtain it for you. All I have, my blood, my life, I would willingly give up for

you, if necessary. But why do you wish to insist forcibly on something that can be of no use or service to you, and which you well know is very distasteful to me? I thought I might dare hope that you valued my satisfaction higher than that of Mr. Anson, for this is, in fact, pleasing Mr. Anson and displeasing me. Since you yourself say—Lord Melbourne does not press me—you ought not to listen to other people, who are trying to support Mr. Anson at my expense; that is not right. I have to complain to-day, dear Victoria, but I know you will not misunderstand your faithful Albert when he puts his case. How can you think that if I cannot do something when you ask me to do it, I should do it at the instance of Uncle Leopold? Can I love any one better than you? Can any third person pay you more respect than I do? Oh! Victoria, how little you know my heart!

The fact is that Schenk cannot be made Treasurer; he is not needed, and moreover does not wish to be. I might perhaps later appoint a Treasurer for dignity's sake. I shall in any case be receiving no English money till next April, for the annuities are to be post-paid quarterly; therefore the appointment of a Treasurer is not so very pressing. As regards my Household, I beg you in the meantime to appoint only the Groom of the Stole, two out of the three Gentlemen, and only three each of the four Grooms and Equerries, for these will be quite enough to start with for the sake of appearances, and it will leave me more latitude for the future; you may rest assured that I shall appoint no one who will prejudice you or your interests. Moreover, for financial reasons, if all the places are filled, an increasing of the people of my court [in English] would hardly be possible. . . .

Again to-day I have worried you with my own stupid affairs, poor Victoria! But I am sure you will sympathise with and understand my feelings.

Yesterday being Papa's birth-day we had a great festivity—the opening of a beautiful new theatre, which Papa has had built. There was a brilliantly successful performance of *Robert le Diable*, at which many delegations and foreigners were present. The day before we had had a gala Banquet of 300 persons, and on New Year's Eve a Ball. The one-legged Prince Ernest of Hessen-Philippsthal was here, but illness prevented Duke Bernard of Meiningen from coming.

A thousand thanks for the paper from the Chancellor, which I

shall communicate to the Ministry to-day. I do not think he is quite right about the guardianship of the children. You really cannot need to nominate me as guardian (*Vormund*) ; for every father has a legal right to control the education of his children, till they are of age. With the rest I shall not attempt to deal further, for Stockmar, who will soon be in England, understands very clearly what to do, and will be able to discuss everything with you and the Ministers.

Now I have finished, and must beg your pardon for boring you so much. The happy moment when we can embrace each other and talk of our love is drawing nearer each day. May God give you His blessing, and may you continue to love your ever faithful, ALBERT.

To Queen Victoria.

GOTHA, 6th January 1840.

DEAR, BELOVED VICTORIA,—Accept my heartfelt thanks for your dear letter of the 26th-27th. It delights me to see that you went to Communion at Windsor on the same Sunday that we did at Coburg ; we thus entered into communion with the Lord together. I quite realise that to partake of it with people whom one cannot love, must be terribly distasteful. In such a case one should not do it at all, for one cannot receive the blessing of the sacred act, if one's feeling is not entirely one of love.

We are curious to know when Torrington and his party will arrive,¹ for we have had no news yet of their departure. We have so little time left at Gotha, for we shall probably be leaving here on the 23rd. I tell you this so that you may address your letters so as not to come here when we have left. Letters usually take seven or eight days on the way.

I wrote so fully about Anson in my most recent letters, that I will now be silent and leave the matter for your good feeling to deal with. Your remark at the end of your letter about "a new proposition concerning the management of my money affairs" rather worries me. The accounts are so simple that I could manage them myself, if I had the time and inclination. Moreover, I am entering upon already existing conditions, but to me new. I cannot shape them to my liking, but must accept them as they are. As the Queen's

¹ Lord Torrington and Colonel Grey started on 14th January with three royal carriages from Buckingham Palace for Gotha, to conduct the Prince to England.

husband, I shall be in a dependent position, more dependent than any other husband, in my domestic circumstances. My private fortune is all that remains to me to dispose of. I am therefore not unfair in requesting that that which has belonged to me since I came of age nearly a year ago (and indeed belongs to any grown man) shall be left under my own control.

I enclose a cutting from the Gotha newspaper which may perhaps interest you. It describes the New Year celebrations and Papa's birth-day.

I must now say good-bye, dearest, much loved. Each day that flies by brings me nearer to you ; soon we shall be in each other's arms. With burning love for you, I remain, your faithful, ALBERT.

To the Same.

GOTHA, 10th January 1840.

DEAR, BELOVED VICTORIA,—I have not heard from you for an age. I long so much for a few lines from you and look for them every day, but the ninth has passed, and still I have nothing in my hands. Are you well ? I hope so.

Except for a heavy cold, which has bothered me for nearly a week and has not been treated by me with much consideration, I am quite well. An English artist, named George Patten,¹ left yesterday. He was brought here by your engraver, Graves,² to paint my portrait and have it engraved at the same time. The picture is finished and is universally admired here. The painter wished to present it to you himself, and asked for a letter to you. He said it while I was still sitting half an hour before he was due to depart. Leiningen was kind enough to write the letter, so I hope it will reach you before the picture and Charles's letter too.

The moment of our departure comes ever nearer, and so does that wonderful moment when I see you again. It is like a fairy story to me, and I shan't believe it till I feel the pressure of your hand in mine.

Two days ago we went to pay a farewell visit at Weimar, where we were received with astonishing cordiality by the Grand Duke Charles Frederick. Our party was : Ernest and myself, Herr von

¹ George Patten (1801-1865). In the *Dictionary of National Biography* it is stated that the picture was engraved by Charles Eden Wagstaff.

² Robert Graves (1798-1873). Line engraver.

Löwenfels and Seymour. The Grand Duke's son, Charles Alexander, whom you know, was not there. He has followed Ernest's example at Dresden, and established himself at Breslau, where he has entered a Prussian Cuirassier regiment as Captain. The Archduchess (Maria Paulowna) was surprisingly gracious to us, and asked very many questions about you and your life. You may imagine, dear, good Victoria, how glad I was to talk about you. To-morrow we probably travel to Meiningen to make our departing bow. We have settled definitely on the 23rd for our departure. Allow me to remind you that you have not yet really invited Papa! My horses and library start to-day. Now I say good-bye again, and beg you to keep your love for your faithful, ALBERT.

Ernest lays himself at your feet. He has just been made a Colonel by the King of Saxony, and is much pleased at it.

To the Same.

GOTHA, 13th January 1840.

DEAREST, BELOVED VICTORIA, I had just sent off my last letter to you, when I received your dear lines of the 30th and 31st.¹ It makes me very glad and proud that you did not altogether dislike my painting. I quite agree with you; how splendid it will be when we can paint together. I do not remember having received Cust's petition, and, if for this reason alone, I shall not answer him.

As regards Lord Melbourne's letter, I am sorry I cannot agree with you that "nothing could be better," as it contains no really clear ideas and is self-contradictory. He states that his "principal object is to avoid anything like a difference of opinion" between me and H.M. I hope Lord Melbourne does not think we want to lead a life of strife and dissension instead of one of love and unity; one's opinions are not to be dictated, for an opinion is the result of reflection and conviction, and you could not respect a husband who never formed an opinion till you had formed yours, and whose opinions were always the same as yours. It is a somewhat different matter to express an opinion publicly on subjects on which not the slightest "division" must be allowed to appear. Lord Melbourne goes on to say, "it would be prudent not to take an active part in political questions," but still I ought to be considered as counten-

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 263.

ancing the policy of the actual Government. Both these together are an impossibility, for "countenancing" is "activity."

As regards Lord Melbourne's remarks on the Household, your sound clear mind will discover, on closer examination, that there are contradictions throughout. I have always asked for a Household of mixed politics, and the answer always has been, "that would not do, but I must have people out of parties" (non-party people). Now Lord Melbourne himself says that this is impossible, and that the Household should have "a decided leaning to the opinions of" the Government of the day, and yet "they should not change upon a change of administration." How is that possible? If I now accept decided Whigs and a Tory Ministry comes into power, I suppose these same people are to remain on and become decided Tories! You cannot wish yourself and myself to be surrounded by such characterless people. I have written a few lines to Lord Melbourne, and enclose a copy for you.

In the evening of the day that I had your letter of the 30th, your dear letter of the 1st came into my hands, written on beautiful paper. It pleased me greatly, for it expressed your dear, warm-hearted spirit. I am most grateful for your kind good wishes for the New Year, and hope with you that it may bring every blessing we may hope to expect. . . .

You say more about the Treasurer. I have exhausted all my arguments on that point, and written myself nearly blind to make you understand how distasteful it all is to me. It was the first and only request with which I appealed to your love, and I do not wish to make a second; but I declare calmly that I will not take Mr. Anson nor anybody now.

In accordance with your arrangements Torrington and Grey will leave London on the 16th and arrive here on the 24th. If we are to be with you by the 8th, we must leave here on the 28th. I should love it if we can have one day, Sunday the 9th, to spend quietly together; it will do us all good after the journey.

Two days ago we went on a visit to Meiningen where we found the family in good health. The Duke [Bernard], Duchess [Marie] and also Prince Ernest of Hessen-Barchfeld charged me to present many compliments to you. To-day we expect the Grand Duke of Weimar here.

Now I must say good-bye. Look well after your dear health.

With truest and most unquenchable love, I remain, my dearest Victoria, your faithful, ALBERT.

Papa, Mama, and especially Ernest, recommend themselves to your favour. Ernest wrote to you from Dresden for Christmas. One remark I venture to make, namely this : you should not confuse personal matters with business, but keep them strictly separate, so that if I, following my duty and conscience, say what I think about business matters, you may not take it as failure of my love towards yourself, which nothing can shake.

To Queen Victoria.

GOTHA, 17th January 1840.

DEAR BELOVED VICTORIA, Your dear, charming letter of the 6th has caused me immense pleasure, and I cannot thank you enough for it ; for it is so full of love and loving self-denial and of the outpourings of your dear nature. I must confess that recently I have rather trembled on opening a letter from you, for it has distressed me so much (since the Household and Treasurer questions have been under discussion) that you were withholding something from me, and it forces me to contradict you and give myself so much pain. And yet I could not do otherwise. To-day there is nothing to upset me, and I can tell you with a free heart how inexpressibly I love you, dear Victoria.

So my setting of the Orange Flowers has pleased you ; that makes me very happy. I am now working on a duet for which Ernest has written some pretty verses. It is for us both to sing the day after the wedding. But I am afraid I shall not be able to perfect it, as I have much too much to do and have too many interruptions.

The Duke of Meiningen has addressed through me an earnest request to you. He says that the state of his sister's [Queen Adelaide] health is not free from danger, and that shortly after going to church she had another haemorrhage. He fears that the long marriage service in the cold Chapel Royal would be prejudicial to her, and yet he is sure she could not be restrained from being present at the ceremony, for fear of reviving the silly clamour of the newspapers and of making public the attitude she adopted towards the event, unless you can induce her to stay away. I feel sure you will gladly do what you can to get her not to go to the

Chapel. I quite appreciate what you say about the coat of arms, but the argument in favour of my having them quartered is that I do not as your husband, wish to bear your arms—i.e. those of the Sovereign or, as in this case, Queen Regnant—though of course I could not have it otherwise than as you say ; but it is my right to quarter the English arms with mine, since I have been created before marriage an English prince by Act of Parliament, and as such, may quarter my arms with those of Saxony, as Uncle Leopold did. Have the kindness to get the matter further enquired into, and mention my argument to those whose opinion you asked, and see if they do not agree with me. I really ask you to do this.

I have a thousand messages for you from Papa, Mama, Grand-mama, Ernest, Charles Leiningen and his wife, Ernest Württemberg, Späth, and now I must myself say good-bye, laying myself at the feet of my dear rosy bride, remaining ever, your faithful, ALBERT.

The death of your aunt, the Landgravine,¹ will no doubt have distressed you much. I hope that the mourning will not postpone our wedding, though it may be necessary to limit the festivities. There will be a month in between. . . .

To Queen Victoria.

GOTHA, 20th January 1840.

DEAR BELOVED VICTORIA,—I must first give you many, many thanks for your loving letter of the 9th, written still from Windsor. So our marriage is definitely fixed for the 10th of February, and Grey is to come here with Torrington. You say they left London on the 15th, and yet we have had an express letter by post from Torrington to say they expect to arrive here at Gotha at 5 o'clock to-day. He must have made a much earlier start, for he could not have reached here so quickly flying on the wings of a pigeon.

I am so glad we are to go together directly after the wedding to Windsor, and are not to be joined there by the rest of the family until two days later. I only wish we could remain there a few days longer, as you until now expected that we could. It is usual in England, is it not ? for newly married people to stay up to four or six weeks away from the town and society, and they seem to make a great point of this. It might perhaps be a good and delicate

¹ Elizabeth, daughter of George III, widow of the Landgrave Frederick II of Hesse-Homburg. She died on 10th January.

action not to depart from this custom altogether and to retire from the public eye for at least a fortnight—or a week.

What you write of the aunt¹ has greatly relieved me; you did tell me of it before, and I expect the best results from the arrangement. I am pleased also with Dunfermline's² advice; it makes me hope that the plan of this journey will be resumed.

Now I must again thank you for your dear letter of the 11th.³ Stockmar, at your wish, has written me all about the matters *en question*, but as he does not know all the reasons I have explained to you in so many letters, he merely repeats what you say: that Anson is a pleasant young man, and that I require a Treasurer, but am not obliged to give him my "confidential businesses" to look after. Repeating a former argument is no answer, when someone has produced reasons in opposition to it. I stick to what I said.

Buckingham Palace must now be beautiful. It will be a glorious moment for me when I enter it by your side. Thank you for the dainty little medals; they really are charming.

I can tell you little about this place. The Grand Duke of Weimar has left us. On his last day a great shooting party was got up for him, in which I took part, and was so lucky as to kill 105 hares to my own gun. We have had here for a few days on a visit Princess Caroline of Schaumberg-Lippe-Bückeburg, whom you have met in England, with her niece, Princess Mathilde. Two days ago the city and court society gave a great Ball for me, with 500 persons present, which was most brilliant and lively. Among well-known Englishmen we have Colonel Bentinck,⁴ a Guardsman, visiting here.

Now good-bye, dearest Victoria, and keep your heart true and devoted to your ever loving, ALBERT.

To the Same.

GOTHA, 23rd January 1840.

DEAR BELOVED VICTORIA,—Many, many thanks for your dear letter of the 12th³ which Torrington handed to me. They duly

¹ The Duchess of Kent. See letter of 10th December, and *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 361.

² James Abercromby, Lord Dunfermline, late Speaker of the House of Commons.

³ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 266.

⁴ Sir John William Bentinck.

arrived here on the 20th, stopping for 24 hours at Frankfort. Your Speech at the opening of Parliament must certainly have made you rather nervous, but I understand that you do these Speeches so well that I am sure you surmounted all the reefs successfully. On the day of Torrington's and Grey's arrival we went to a great evening party at Grandmama's and took them with us. The day before yesterday we held a brilliant masked Ball in the new theatre ; it was really very successful and everybody enjoyed it greatly. To-day my Investiture with the Order of the Garter is to take place, and I hope it will all go well.

We have had a terrible loss here, which has plunged us and the whole country in grief. Herr von Carlowitz, Papa's best and, I may say, only intimate friend, died suddenly of a stroke. He had been Prime Minister for 18 years, and Chancellor of the House, and was a distinguished statesman. He was universally respected and loved.

Our departure is fixed for the 28th. On that day we go to Cassel, on the 29th to Arnsberg, on the 30th to Düsseldorf, on the 31st to Liège, on the 1st to Brussels, where we stay till the 5th. Then we go to Ostend, on the 6th to Calais, on the 7th to Canterbury and on the 8th to your arms. We shall try to arrive by midday, so as to gain as much of that day as possible.

It is all wrong that Mama has never yet received her bracelet, for it points to there being little regard for her, and she feels it keenly.

I must stop now, but will write to you again to-morrow, if I can. So good-bye and think kindly of your faithful, ALBERT.

To Queen Victoria.

GOTHA, 25th January 1840.

DEAR BELOVED VICTORIA,—My heartfelt thanks for your dear, friendly letter of the 17th.¹ I am delighted that the Opening of Parliament went off so well, and that your reception by the public was so good. This is a good omen for me too, as it proves that the public welcome our marriage ; and I am very glad to hear that the mourning for the Landgravine will not stand in the way of the wedding. I knew her very well, and a week before her death had received a really most friendly letter from her.

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 267.

Your judgment of Patten's picture is just the same as mine. The eyes look as if they were dazzled by a glare of light. With this letter I send you a little miniature to have fixed in a bracelet to wear in the morning. I consider it much better than the one by Ross,¹ though it may not perhaps be so well painted.

Our Garter ceremony went off very well, and was most imposing. Papa and I stood under a canopy, and Ernest and Charles by the side of us on a dais. On the left were the ladies of the nobility, on the right Mama, Princess Reuss and Anna, Marie Leiningen, Ernest Württemberg, Prince Reuss and suite. In the body of the chamber on the left stood Papa's suite, the Court, the Ministry, and the public authorities ; on the right the Members of the Chamber and all foreigners who come to Court (a large number). On the other side of the partition a crowd of onlookers. Your Gentlemen were then conducted from their rooms by the Master of Ceremonies, two Chamberlains and two pages. At the entrance of the chamber they were received by the two Marshals and led up to the Throne. Torrington carried the Patent, and Colonel Grey and Colonel Bentinck of the Coldstream Guards the two satin cushions on which lay the Insignia of the Order. Geheimrat Stein presented a formal address to Papa acquainting him of the despatch of the Order. Torrington handed your two official letters to Papa and read them aloud in English ; the Master of the Ceremonies followed with a translation in German. Then he took the two cushions from their bearers and presented them to Papa,² who hung the Chain round my neck and pinned on the Star, while Charles fastened the Garter. Then your official despatch to me was read in English by Seymour, and in German by Schenk. After the Court had passed before us, we partook of a meal attended by 250 persons, and honoured by the presence of Uncle [Count Emanuel] Mensdorff, accompanied by Hugo and Alphons. Papa proposed your health, Torrington Papa's, mine and that of the House of Coburg, and the First Hofmarschall that of the Knights of the Garter. In the evening a full dress performance (*Der Freischütz*) in the Theatre.

Yesterday we had a great shoot and this evening there is a "dress

¹ Sir W. Ross. Reproduced on p. 250 of Grey's *Early Years*.

² Albert's Investiture with the Garter took place by the Queen's authority at the hands of the Duke, who was himself a Knight of the Order.

Ball." I must say good-bye, dearest Victoria. Good-bye, and keep your love for your faithful, ALBERT.

To Queen Victoria.

GORLA, 27th January 1840.

DEAR BELOVED VICTORIA,—I must write you two words before I leave my dear home for ever. We start on our journey early tomorrow morning ; to-day I have to get through the packing and other arrangements, and the leave-takings. It will be a trying day for me, and many tears will be shed, but I trust I shall not break down myself. To-day there is a concert and Court for leave-taking.

Again I say good-bye, for I feel in a state of confusion ; you will hear from me again from Brussels. Give the aunt a thousand messages, and forgive me for not having written to her. It has been simply impossible. In honest love for you, my dear bride, your faithful, ALBERT.

To the Same.

BRUSSELS, 1st February 1840.

DEAR BELOVED VICTORIA,—A courier is going this evening to London ; so I seize my pen to tell you in two lines of our safe arrival this afternoon in Brussels. I am this much nearer to you. I found waiting here your two dear letters of the 21st¹ and 23rd, and thank you heartily for them. You can imagine how annoyed I am at the news of the really most indecent vote in the Commons about my income. We saw it in the paper when we dined at Aix. Even in the House of Lords they are making themselves unnecessarily unpleasant. I must stop, and can only tell that if your love remains, they cannot make me unhappy. Ever and always, your true, ALBERT.

To the Same.

BRUSSELS, 4th February 1840.

DEAR BELOVED VICTORIA,—I owe you very very many thanks for your dear letter of the 31st,¹ which I hereby duly render. I am most delighted to hear that the little picture has not displeased you. I think your criticisms of it are quite right ; I also find it too pale and

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 268.

too grey round the eyes. 'Torrington and Grey have been given their Orders. That you are staying only three days at Windsor, since you say it is the correct thing to do, is agreeable to me, for I shall have so much to do in London before I have unpacked everything and made some sort of order.

The bracelet for Mama, for which I am most grateful, will certainly give her great pleasure, and she needs it particularly now that she is so lonely and deserted. I am very glad that you are going to give your royal command for my arms, and thank you from my heart.

So Vecto¹ is going to marry the Duc de Nemours! I am sure it will be for their happiness, they are both so good and gentle. M. de Bussière, the French Minister at Dresden, travelled here express, and yesterday made a great speech to Papa, as Head of the House, in presenting the proposal of marriage. In the meantime Papa has consented, and Uncle Ferdinand and Victoire are expected. The opinion of Ernest and all of us about Augusta² [the Duke of Cambridge's daughter] is that, all things considered, she would make the most suitable *partie* for him [Ernest] that now offers itself. Still he must wait to see what his heart says to it, until he gets to know her better, which will not be difficult for him now in London.

I am surprised that you have said no word of sympathy to me about the vote of the 28th, for those nice Tories have cut off half my income (that was to be expected), and it makes my position no very pleasant one. It is hardly conceivable that anyone could behave as meanly and disgracefully as they have to you and me. It cannot do them much good, for it is hardly possible to maintain any respect for them any longer. Everyone, even here, is indignant about it.

I am sending you a very silly book, *Monsieur Jabol*, but I am sure it will amuse you. I have been laughing myself nearly ill for three months over the wittiness of the drawings, and the truly French style of the comments (*Erklärung*).

We start for Calais early tomorrow, and then there awaits us that sad time on the sea, which, I fear, will be bound up with great sacrifices! The public, who will probably be assembled at Dover, will obtain a pleasant vision of me!

¹ Princess Victoire of Saxe-Coburg.

² She married Frederick William of Mecklenburg-Strelitz in June 1843.

Now good-bye, dear, dear Victoria, and think of your faithful,
ALBERT.

To Queen Victoria.

Dover, 7th February 1840.

DEAR BELOVED VICTORIA,—Now I am in the same country as you. What a comforting thought for me! And to-morrow I shall be looking into your dear eyes. It is hard to have to wait till to-morrow evening; and yet the long absence has flown by so quickly, and to-morrow's dawn will soon break. We had a terrible crossing yesterday, for the whole boat was crammed with sick people. I never remember having suffered so long or so violently. Papa and Ernest too were in a miserable condition. When we landed our faces were more the colour of wax candles than human visages. However, our reception was very satisfactory. Thousands were standing on the quay, and greeted us with loud and continuous cheering. Torrington says it is long since he saw so hearty a welcome.

The authorities are to come this morning with their Address, and I shall return thanks with the reply sent me from London. After that we set out for Canterbury. I shall be very glad to meet the good Stockmar there again. Have the kindness, splendid Victoria, to give the aunt a thousand messages from me. Papa and Ernest lay themselves at your feet. I lay myself higher—right up to your heart, hoping to find it open to me, and remain with unchanging love and attachment, my own dear bride's ever faithful, ALBERT.

To the Same.

CANTERBURY, 7th February 1840.

DEAREST, BELOVED VICTORIA,—A very few words of heartfelt thanks for your very dear letter, which I found waiting for me, and which has given me so much pleasure. You need not disturb yourself about the room; a tiny corner close to you is enough to make me over-full of joy. . . . Stockmar not to be found here, for which I am amazingly sorry. We have just arrived and have been most heartily welcomed. I must hasten to close this letter. Forgive my horrid scrawl and keep your love for your faithful, ALBERT.



H.M. Queen Victoria

From the mezzotint by B. P. Gibbon, after William Fowler

To Duchess Caroline of Saxe-Gotha Altenburg.

LONDON, 10th February 1840.

DEAR GRANDMAMA.— In less than three hours I shall be standing before the altar with my dear bride. In that solemn moment I must once again ask for your blessing, which I am well assured I shall receive, and which shall be my protection and my joy. I must end. May God be my helper!

Ever your faithful, GRANDSON.

PART TWO
THE YEARS OF TESTING

EARLY in 1836 King Leopold I made his first intimation to his faithful Baron Stockmar of his scheme for a marriage between Victoria and Albert. The trusted Coburger, in his reply, first described Albert's character, as far as he then knew it, and then indicated in clear terms the programme for his future position in England. He wrote : " . . . Until I have observed him longer, I can form no judgment as to his capacity and the probable development of his character. He is said to be circumspect, discreet, and even now cautious. But all this is not enough. He ought to have not merely great ability, but a *right* ambition, and great force of will as well. To pursue for a lifetime a political career so arduous demands more than energy and inclination—it demands also that earnest frame of mind which is ready to sacrifice mere pleasure to real usefulness. If he is not satisfied hereafter with the consciousness of having achieved one of the most influential positions in Europe, how often will he feel tempted to repent what he has undertaken ? If he does not from the very outset accept it as an undertaking of grave responsibility, on the efficient fulfilment of which his honour and happiness depend, there is small likelihood of his succeeding."

How the chances of attaining this high-pitched ideal then stood becomes obvious when Stockmar's words, written a short time before the engagement, are recalled. He wrote that Albert had not so far shown the slightest interest in politics ; he never read a newspaper. What prospect was there then that there would be any alteration in the Prince's disposition, which was borne out only too well by Stockmar's experience of him ? Even if there was a change, how far would this youth of twenty years succeed in asserting himself in circumstances so utterly strange to him ? Moreover, the British Constitution provided in no way for the conception of a Queen Regnant's consort. Victoria herself desired anything rather than that Albert should busy himself with politics, and was encouraged in

this view by the adored Lord Melbourne. As an engaged girl she had written the Prince a warning letter.¹

"The English are very jealous of any foreigner interfering in the government of this country, and have already in some of the papers (which are friendly to me and you) expressed a hope that you would not interfere. Now, though I know you never would, still, if you were a Peer, they would all say, the Prince meant to play a political part. I am certain you will understand this."

The Queen maintained this attitude of refusal after the wedding. She would never discuss politics with her husband nor pay attention to his questions or suggestions. Politics were the affair of the all-powerful Minister, Lord Melbourne, whose counterpart in the Household was Baroness Lehzen, Victoria's old governess. Not only did this lady look after the private correspondence of her former pupil, but the Royal Household as well, and held the powerful position of the Queen's private treasurer. Three months after his marriage Albert was forced to admit that he was "only the husband, and not the master in the house."²

But before long the influence of Stockmar, who at first was permanently in England and later spent several months in each year there, began to effect a fundamental alteration ; it was essential that the Prince should attain to the position in England to which his Uncle Leopold had once upon a time seemed destined. As far as Albert was concerned, his calculations were entirely successful. He managed to influence the Prince through his pride and his sense of duty, and showed him that his predestined task in life was to re-establish the idea of kingship in England, to re-unite the Crown with the nation, and the means to the end was to be simply the example which the Palace must set to the nation, strict adhesion to principle, and maintenance of the Crown separate from, and superior to, party. In her youth and inexperience Victoria had failed to live up to this basic principle of the monarchic institution, for she was unwilling to cut loose from the Whig Ministry ; she gave offence to the Tories, and called the national hero, the Duke of Wellington, an "old rebel," and was against inviting him to her wedding. Other mistakes she committed, in consequence of which many anxieties were likely to arise for the future of the British Crown, the scope of which is after all limited by the Constitution. The treatment by Parliament of the questions of Albert's rank and income was in itself a protest against the Crown's partisan connections.

But all Albert's readiness with his own special qualities of tact, diligence, and patience in reinforcing Stockmar's efforts to effect

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. i, p. 252.

² To Prince Löwenstein, May 1840.

an improvement in his position, and all Stockmar's success, as time went on, in securing the active support of Ministers—first of Melbourne, and later (and most important) of Peel and Aberdeen—would have failed, had not the experience of falling in love made a totally different creature of Victoria. For she came to love Albert above all else ; she worshipped him, and all he did or said was perfection itself ; he had no superior. To her her married and family life, in its unruffled harmony, was a source of unimagined joy. In the company of her children, who in course of time reached the number of nine, and of her adored husband, and preferably far away from the capital, at Windsor, or better still in the idyllic Highlands or in the Isle of Wight, Victoria enjoyed the greatest blessing that can be granted to any woman.

Under the rays of this happiness Albert's position was bound to gain in substance and significance. He made a beginning by being empowered to supervise officially the arts and sciences and the philanthropic and social schemes of his period, and it soon came about that there was no problem affecting his countrymen to the solution of which Albert had not brought to bear his warm heart, profound intelligence, his iron power of work, and his talent as a speaker. Step by step, with surpassing patience he advanced to his great goal. Again, since he had the *entrée* to Ministerial parties and could take cognisance of all papers dealing with foreign policy, the peculiar domain of English constitutional rulers, he was able to record his views on policy in exhaustive memoranda, and so gradually bring himself to the front.

It was a clear mark of success that, when Victoria was expecting her first child, he was appointed to be Regent in the event of her death. When Melbourne's Cabinet was turned out by Peel, "the Prince" played a decisive part in the negotiations preceding the change of government. And it was not long before he became the Queen's most confidential—indeed indispensable—adviser, and at the same time her Private Secretary and "permanent Minister," the man nearest the Throne. By the time of the ministerial crises of 1845 and 1846, his position was so generally acknowledged that he was accepted without question as the pivot of the negotiations and acted boldly as the faithful champion of the Throne. There was a similar change in his position in the Household, which was altered and reorganised according to his plans ; Lehzen's power was ended, and she herself was finally dismissed.

When this Part closes, Albert's influence will be seen to be unbounded, not only in the Queen's heart, but equally so in the family circle, and in the department of politics—he is, in fact, in everything except name, King of England. He has won his way

to the goal pointed out to him by Stockmar. The Crown stands, as it should, above party and outside politics ; the exemplary lives led by its wearer and her husband have won for it far greater dignity, respect, and popularity than ever Victoria's predecessors enjoyed -- or indeed she herself at the beginning of her reign. If it be allowed that the symbols of the Victorian era are sound common sense, family life, and "morality" (i.e. moral courage), the part played by Albert stands out clearly. The real creator of the Victorian era is the German prince who came from Coburg.

1840-1847

To Prince William zu Löwenstein-Wertheim-Freudenberg.

May 1840.—In my home life I am very happy and contented; but the difficulty in filling my place with the proper dignity is, that I am only the husband, and not the master in the house.

To Duke Ernest I of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 4th June 1840.—We came back yesterday from Claremont, where we have again passed two days. We went there this time in order to be able to go from the neighbourhood to the celebrated Epsom races, which were certainly very interesting. The numbers of people there were estimated at from one to two hundred thousand. We were received with the greatest enthusiasm and cordiality. I rode about a little in the crowd, but was almost crushed by the rush of people.

I had to go to the Anti-Slave-Trade Meeting, and my speech was received with great applause, and seems to have produced a good effect in the country. This rewards me sufficiently for the fear and nervousness I had to conquer before I began my speech. I composed it myself, and then learnt it by heart, for it is always difficult to have to speak in a foreign language before five or six thousand eager listeners.

The Park near the Palace of which you speak, is really very pleasant, and I have enlivened it with all sorts of animals and rare aquatic birds.

¹ See Grey, p. 341.

To Duchess Caroline of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 11th June 1840.

DEAR GRANDMAMA,—I hasten to give you an account of an event which might otherwise be misrepresented to you, which endangered my life and that of Victoria, but from which we escaped under the protection of the watchful hand of Providence. We drove out yesterday afternoon, about six o'clock, to pay Aunt Kent a visit, and to take a turn round Hyde Park. We drove in a small phaeton. I sat on the right, Victoria on the left. We had hardly proceeded a hundred yards from the palace, when I noticed, on the footpath on my side, a little mean-looking man holding something towards us ; and before I could distinguish what it was, a shot was fired, which almost stunned us both, it was so loud, and fired barely six paces from us. Victoria had just turned to the left to look at a horse, and could not therefore understand why her ears were ringing, as from its being so very near she could hardly distinguish that it proceeded from a shot having been fired. The horses started and the carriage stopped. I seized Victoria's hands, and asked if the fright had not shaken her, but she laughed at the thing.

I then looked again at the man, who was still standing in the same place, his arms crossed, and a pistol in each hand. His attitude was so affected and theatrical that it quite amused me. Suddenly he again pointed his pistol and fired a second time. This time Victoria also saw the shot, and stooped quickly, drawn down by me. The ball must have passed just above her head, to judge from the place where it was found sticking in an opposite wall. The many people who stood round us and the man, and were at first petrified with fright on seeing what happened, now rushed upon him. I called to the postilion to go on, and we arrived safely at Aunt Kent's. From thence we took a short drive through the Park, partly to give Victoria a little air, partly also to show the public that we had not, on account of what happened, lost all confidence in them.

To-day I am very tired and knocked up by the quantity of visitors, the questions, and descriptions I have had to give. You must therefore excuse my ending now, only thanking you for your

¹ See Grey, p. 344. This was the first of the seven attacks made on the Queen during her reign. A plea of insanity was set up, and Oxford was committed to a lunatic asylum.

letter which I have just received, but have not yet been able to read.

My chief anxiety was lest the fright should have been injurious to Victoria in her present state, but she is quite well, as I am myself. I thank Almighty God for His protection. Your faithful grandson,
ALBERT.

The name of the culprit is Edward Oxford. He is seventeen years old, a waiter in a low inn—not mad—but quite quiet and composed.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 10th July 1840.

ALLERDURCHLAUCHTIGSTER KÖNIG,—I have had the honour to receive the distressing news of the decease of His Majesty, your father. I feel all the more this loss, so grievous to Your Majesty and to your whole House, since I was favoured with His late Majesty's acquaintance, and am in a position to pay personal respect to his rare merits. It is my most heart-felt wish that kind Providence may strengthen Your Majesty in this moment of deep sorrow, and that it may grant that Your Majesty's reign may be long, glorious, and full of blessings.

Commending myself to a continuance of Your Majesty's remembrance and favour, I am, with the greatest respect and devotion, your Majesty's faithful servant and cousin, ALBERT.

To Duke Ernest I of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.¹

24th July 1840.—An affair of the greatest importance to me will be settled in a few days. I mean the Regency Bill, which will to-day be read for a third time in the House of Lords, after which it will be brought before the House of Commons. There has been much trouble to carry the matter through, for all sorts of intrigues were at work, and had not Stockmar induced the Opposition to support the Government, it might well have ended as did the £50,000. There was not a word of opposition in the House of Lords, except from the Duke of Sussex. . . .

Lord Melbourne is a very good, upright man, and supports me in everything that is right.

¹ See Grey, p. 351.

To Duchess Caroline of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 12th Feb. 1841.—The cold has been intense. . . . Nevertheless, I managed, in skating, three days ago, to break through the ice in Buckingham Palace Gardens. I was making my way to Victoria, who was standing on the bank with one of her ladies, and when within some few yards of the bank I fell plump into the water, and had to swim for two or three minutes in order to get out. Victoria was the only person who had the presence of mind to lend me assistance, her lady being more occupied in screaming for help. The shock from the cold was extremely painful, and I cannot thank Heaven enough, that I escaped with nothing more than a severe cold. They had, it seems, broken the ice recently at that particular spot, and it had frozen over again, so that it was impossible to distinguish the place. . . .

The Christening² went off very well. Your little great-grandchild behaved with great propriety, and like a Christian. She was awake, but did not cry at all, and seemed to crow with immense satisfaction at the lights and brilliant uniforms, for she is very intelligent and observing. The ceremony took place at half-past six p.m., and after it there was a dinner, and then we had some instrumental music. The health of the little one was drunk with great enthusiasm.

I can scarcely realise the fact, that I have already been married a year and two days ; and it brings the sad truth afresh to my mind, that we have been so long separated from each other. I hope, however, to see you either here or at Ostend. Uncle Leopold, who is very well, will, alas ! not remain with us long. To me his being here is a great pleasure.

The little girl bears the Saxon arms in the middle of the English, which looks very pretty.

To Duke Ernest I of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

WINDSOR, 2nd Aug. 1841.—We returned yesterday from our excursion into the country, and are highly delighted with the beautiful things we have seen, and the heartiness and enthusiasm of the reception we have everywhere received. There genuinely

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 100.

² Of the Princess Royal.

is still in the English country-people an extraordinary amount of religious feeling and devotion to the Throne, the law and the Church, which it is most gratifying to see. Hatfield House, which once belonged to Queen Elizabeth and has been since James I, the property of Lord Salisbury's family, would very much interest you with its architecture and fine wood-carvings.

To Sir Robert Peel, Prime Minister.¹

3rd October 1841.

MY DEAR SIR ROBERT,—When you were last here our conversation turned upon the *Nibelungenlied*, and you seemed to take some interest in this celebrated poem of the prehistoric times of Germany. I thought it would amuse you to see a very fine edition of the work, which has lately appeared, and therefore send it to you to look at. The illustrations are by Bendemann and Hübner, and fine specimens of the school of Düsseldorf. I am sure you will be pleased with the correctness of drawing and composition.

I was glad to see that your announcement of the intention to form a Royal Commission was so well received in the House of Commons. I have thought much of the proposed plan, and have arrived at the conviction that there had better be no artist by profession on the Committee. The benefit of an artist's opinion would be as well or even better obtained by taking it upon examination, as this would enable the Commission to procure the different opinions of a greater number of artists. I am afraid, moreover, that the discussion upon the various points would not be so free amongst the *laymen* if distinguished professionals were present, as these would scarcely venture to maintain an opinion in opposition to those of the latter class.

I only give you my crude views, and have no wish whatever to press them against the experience of others.

Believe me, dear Sir Robert, &c., &c., ALBERT.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 11th November 1841.

YOUR MAJESTY,—I have the honour to inform Your Majesty of the safe delivery of my wife of a healthy prince at a quarter to

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 119. For Sir Robert's reply, see Martin, vol. i, pp. 120-1.

eleven on 9th November.¹ The truly friendly feelings of Your Majesty towards the royal mother and also myself cause us to be assured that you will learn with sympathy of this event.

With true gratification I take advantage of this joyful occasion to assure Your Majesty once again of the sincere respect and devotion, in which I shall ever be Your Majesty's faithful and devoted Servant and Cousin, ALBERT.

To the Same.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 19th November 1841.

YOUR MAJESTY,—The respect and amity with which the Queen, my wife, regards Your Majesty's person, and the pure veneration for Your Majesty with which I myself am penetrated, have inspired us with the desire that Your Majesty may be so gracious as to grant us a request. This request is that Your Majesty may be pleased to stand God-father to our new-born son. I admit without hesitation that the friendly fulfilment of this desire would give us very genuine pleasure. The date of the christening—which unforeseen circumstances might possibly cause to be altered later on—is fixed provisionally for the middle of January, 1842. We think of inviting the Duke of Cambridge, my uncle, Prince Ferdinand zu Wien, Princess Sophia of Great Britain, my grandmother (the widowed Duchess of Gotha), and my mother (the reigning Duchess of Coburg). The Queen intends that the Prince shall be christened Albert Edward in memory of her late Father.

The Queen, who, with the Prince, thanks be to the Almighty, is in perfectly good health, desires to send most friendly messages to Your Majesty, and I seize this opportunity to express once again to Your Majesty my reverence and true devotion.

To the Same.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 12th December 1841.

YOUR MAJESTY,—I have had the honour to receive on the 1st of this month Your Majesty's most kind and friendly letter. Accept from us both our warm thanks for the prompt fulfilment of our request, which Your Majesty has in essence and form granted in a way which could not have been more friendly and gracious. And

¹ Albert Edward, Prince of Wales; later, King Edward VII.

indeed there would be good reason for satisfaction for all who would wish that our desires may be fulfilled, if the Prince of Wales could be granted the happiness of being held at the font by his royal Sponsor. In expressing this heart-felt wish we do not ignore in any way the difficulties, objections, nay, perhaps the impossibilities which Your Majesty may have to face, even though your personal inclination may urge you to grant our request. But it is the plain truth that we should gratefully welcome a visit from the King and Queen. As a further proof of our sincerity my wife has written a letter, which I enclose. Be so gracious as to commend us most kindly to the Queen and communicate to her our sincere invitation.

We have fixed the 25th of January for the Christening, which will take place in the ancient Chapel of St. George here. The objections and inconveniences attaching to so long a journey in the depth of winter are clearly before my eyes, and whilst urging you warmly and eagerly hoping for success, I feel it essential to advise moderation and careful consideration.

I indeed hope that fortunate circumstances may combine to favour us, and allow Your Majesty soon to forward to us the decision that we so much desire. Do not forget, your gracious Majesty, to let us know soon and for certain when and from what port the ship that carries you to us will sail.

Memorandum.¹

Dec. 1841.—Lord Aberdeen has in my opinion laid down the right principle, that the Foreign Powers ought not to propose candidates of their own—ought not to intrigue and push for them—but that the choice of a future husband for the Queen ought to be left to the

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 346. As early as 1840 Louis Philippe formed a scheme to obtain control of the Spanish throne. The whole story is known in history as that of the "Spanish Marriages." Six years later (in 1846) the defence put forward by the King and Guizot of the unseemly haste with which the marriage of the young Queen was forced on by them in 1846, is founded by M. Guizot upon the fact, that, "whether the English Government desired it or not, the Coburg marriage had become probable and imminent."

The English Government did not desire it, either then or at any other time. When the subject was first mooted to Prince Albert in December 1841, he put his views into writing in a Memorandum, which was submitted to Lord Aberdeen.

Lord Aberdeen, in a letter to Princess Lieven (21st December 1841), wrote: "The Spanish marriages were an ugly business, but it is now well over and I have no wish whatever to recur to it, except as an example that notwithstanding M. Guizot's personal opinions and view, we cannot be certain of the conduct of the Government." (Lady Frances Balfour, *Life of the Earl of Aberdeen*, vol. ii, p. 136.)

Spanish nation, and to the feelings of the Queen herself. If such a choice be made, they ought to support it for the sake of tranquillity in Spain, unless it be a choice which could threaten and endanger the balance of power in Europe. [After reviewing the various candidates, and what might be said for Prince Leopold, the Prince concludes,] Still I have no wish to press my cousin, if he should not be asked for by Spain herself, or to sacrifice him, should he have no inclination to undertake so troublesome a task.

To Duke Ernest I of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 24th Dec. 1841.—This is the dear Christmas Eve, on which I have so often listened with impatience for your step, which was to usher us into the present-room. To-day I have two children of my own to give presents to, who, they know not why, are full of happy wonder at the German Christmas-tree and its radiant candles.

To the Same.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 1st June 1842.

DEAR PAPA,—I hasten to give you a true report of the dreadful occurrence of yesterday, that you may be possessed of the actual facts ; and I beg you to communicate the contents of this letter to all our relations, and to send copies of it to dear Grandmama and those who are at a distance, as I have no time to-day to write more.

On Sunday the 29th as we were returning from the Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace, at two o'clock, as we drove along the Mall, there was as usual a crowd of spectators under the trees on our left, who bowed and cheered. When we were nearly opposite Stafford House, I saw a man step out from the crowd and present a pistol full at me. He was some two paces from us. I heard the trigger snap, but it must have missed fire. I turned to Victoria, who was seated on my right, and asked her, “ Did you hear that ? ” She had been bowing to the people on the right, and had observed nothing. I said, “ I may be mistaken, but I am sure I saw someone take aim at us.” When we reached the Palace I asked the footmen who had been at the back of the carriage if they had not noticed a man step forward and stretch his hand towards the carriage, as if he wanted to

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 126.

² *Ibid.*, p. 137.

throw a petition into it. They had noticed nothing. We were immediately impressed with the importance of keeping what had occurred a profound secret. I did not breathe a syllable about it to any one except Colonel Arbuthnot, to whom I told what had happened, and directed him to make it known forthwith to the Inspector of Police, to Sir Robert Peel, and Sir James Graham.

I then ran out upon the balcony to see whether the man had not been seized, which would have led to a commotion and to hundreds crowding round him. But all was quiet ; and the people dispersed, satisfied with having seen the Queen. . . . In the afternoon Sir Robert Peel came with the Head of the Police and took down my statements in writing, together with a description of the man's appearance. I began almost to distrust myself and what I had seen, as no one else had noticed anything, and we were driving rapidly at the time. . . .

Yesterday morning (30th), at 9 a.m., a boy of 14 (named Pearse), who stutters greatly, came to Mr. Murray and said he had seen a man present a pistol at us, as we were returning from church, but not fire, exclaiming afterwards, " Fool that I was, not to fire ! " Besides himself (Pearse) the thing had been seen by an elderly gentleman, who had turned round to him, and said, " This is something too strange." He followed the gentleman, fancying he would go and report the matter to the police, and thinking he might be wanted as a witness ; but the gentleman walked on up St. James's Street. Here he turned round, having observed that the boy continued to follow him, repeated his former exclamation, asked the boy's name, age, address, &c., and wrote them down. Pearse, thinking this was with a view to citing him as a witness, considered the affair was in good hands, and went home. But as he heard no more of the gentleman, he came to the Palace. There was now no longer any doubt, so we sent the boy to the Home Office, where his evidence was taken down. The Police showed the greatest activity. We were naturally much agitated, Victoria very nervous and unwell. As the doctor wished that she should go out, we determined to do so, for we should have had to *shut* ourselves up for months, had we settled not to go out, so long as the miscreant was at large. Besides, as he could have no suspicion he was watched, and although so careless the first time, had yet made such a lucky escape, we felt sure he would again come skulking about the Palace, and that the numerous policemen in plain

clothes, who were on the look-out for him, would seize him on the least imprudence or carelessness on his part. We drove out at 4, gave orders to drive faster than usual, and for the two esquires, Colonel Wylde and Colonel Arbuthnot, to ride close to the carriage. You may imagine that our minds were not very easy. We looked behind every tree, and I cast my eyes round in search of the rascal's face. We, however, got safely through the Parks, and drove towards Hampstead. The weather was superb, and hosts of people on foot. On our way home, as we were approaching the Palace, between the Green Park and the Garden Wall, a shot was fired at us about five paces off. It was the same fellow with the pistol— a little swarthy, ill-looking rascal. The shot must have passed under the carriage, for he lowered his hand. We felt as if a load had been taken off our hearts, and we thanked the Almighty for having preserved us a second time from so great a danger.

John Francis (that is the man's name) was standing near a policeman, who immediately seized him, but could not prevent the shot. It was at the same spot where Oxford had fired at us two years ago, with this difference only, that Oxford was standing on our left with his back to the Garden Wall. Uncle Mensdorff and Mama were driving close behind us. The Duchess Bernhard of Weimar was on horseback not sixty paces from us. The populace are in a state of extreme indignation. He is not out of his mind, but a thorough scamp. His answers are coarse and witty. He tries to make fun of his judges. Little Pearse identified him this morning as the same person he had seen on Sunday. He is twenty-two years old, and a joiner ; the son of a mechanic at one of the theatres ; a wretched creature. I hope his trial will be conducted with the greatest strictness. . . . Your devoted Son, ALBERT.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 13th June 1842.

YOUR MAJESTY,—I am making use of the opportunity offered by Lord Hardwicke's visit to Your Majesty to express my grateful thanks for your gracious letter forwarded to me by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. The poor man was so seriously over-strained by the effort of directing the Rhenish Musical Festival, that he became

really ill, and had to go off to the country to recover his health a little. This circumstance is to blame for my not having yet met that interesting musician. Your Majesty has been very kind in ordering him to bring his score of the *Antigone* with him, and we look forward to enjoying it greatly. I am considering the bold idea of getting the tragedy performed somehow, in order to have justice done to Mendelssohn's works.¹

You have made Lord Hardwicke very happy by your commands, and he obeys them the more readily, since he is genuinely very much attached to you personally.

I am able to give Your Majesty the best news of your god-son, who is growing stronger daily. Lady Lyttelton, who is known to Your Majesty, has been appointed in charge of the nursery ; her experience and her cultured mind make us confident that the children will be wisely looked after.

Your Majesty will doubtless have heard with indignation of the fresh attempt on the Queen's life. I am happy to reassure you that Victoria is well in mind and body and much touched at the sympathy shown on all sides.

To Duke Ernest I of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 4th July 1842.—I have again to tell you of an attempt on Victoria's life. As we drove to the Chapel of St. James's Palace yesterday, a hunchbacked wretch tried to shoot at the carriage in which Victoria, myself, and Uncle Leopold were sitting. The pistol missed fire, and a boy of sixteen (called Dassett) tore the weapon out of his hand and collared him, calling at the same time to the crowd to secure the assassin. Everybody laughed, and the people cried, “ Give him back his pistol ; it is only a joke.” Little Dassett and his brother, however, dragged the fellow to some policemen, who only laughed and pushed him away as making fun of them. The crowd pressed upon poor Dassett in such a way that he had to let the hunchback go. Not satisfied, however, Dassett, followed by the mob, went up to a policeman and showed him the pistol. The policeman seized him, thinking he was the culprit, and wanted to get off by shamming that he had taken the pistol from somebody

¹ Mendelssohn's own description of his visit is given by Theodore Martin, vol. i, pp. 487-9.

² See Martin, vol. i, p. 141.

else. By this time others came up who had seen the attempt, including the boy's uncle who had been present, and there was no longer any doubt of the fact. The pistol was examined by the police inspector, and was found to contain powder, paper tightly rammed down, and some pieces of clay pipe. Last night, about 10 o'clock, the hunchback (whose name is Bean) was arrested. His father is a worker in gold, and he is himself a chemist's assistant. He left his father a week ago, and wrote to him he would "never see him again, as he intended doing something which was not dishonest but desperate, and begged to be remembered to his aunt, and also to his brothers, although they had never treated him like a brother." He signed himself, "Your unhappy, but disobedient son."

I can quite imagine that the circumstances of this attempt being made the day after Francis received his pardon will excite much surprise in Germany. But this letter was written six days before Francis's pardon. As the law now stands, his execution, notwithstanding the verdict of the jury, would have been nothing less than a judicial murder, as it is essential that the act should be committed with intent to kill or wound, and in Francis's case this, to all appearance, was not the fact, at least it was open to grave doubt. The vindictive feeling of the common people would be a thousand times more dangerous than the madness of individuals.¹ . . . Your devoted Son, ALBERT.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 4th August 1842.

YOUR MAJESTY,—Your Majesty's most kind letter from Landsberg was very welcome. Herr Geheimer Rat von Massow is an old acquaintance, and it will give great pleasure to the Queen and myself to see him again and welcome him as a friend of Your Majesty's. With the true enthusiasm of an understanding and experienced lover of art he is going the round of the parks and gardens here, which, we may say without exposing ourselves to a just reproach of Anglomania, are more numerous and more artistically designed and kept than anywhere else. Herr von Massow returned extremely pleased from the great Agricultural

¹ Bean was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment.

Meeting at Bristol, which, as far as I have heard, must have been a specimen of such gatherings well worth seeing.

The Duke of Orleans's horrible death¹ plunged us all in consternation and deep distress. To my imagination it appears as a mysterious enigmatic lesson full of deep significance, and will long exercise my mind and spirit. It has made a strong and agitating impression upon the Queen. The unhappy Duchess will have to show the greatest fortitude and self-control in her state of affliction. According to Uncle Leopold's letters the grief of the whole family is such as to cause well-founded anxiety for the health, nay, even the life of certain of its members. . . .

To Duchess Caroline of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 18th Sept. 1842.—Scotland has made a most favourable impression upon us both. The country is full of beauty, of a severe and grand character; perfect for sport of all kinds, and the air remarkably pure and light in comparison with what we have here. The people are more natural, and marked by that honesty and sympathy which always distinguish the inhabitants of mountainous countries, who live far away from towns. There is, moreover, no country where historical traditions are preserved with such fidelity, or to the same extent. Every spot is connected with some interesting historical fact, and with most of these Sir Walter Scott's accurate descriptions have made us familiar. The finest points we visited were Perth, Loch Leven, Scone, Dunkeld, Taymouth, Killin, Loch Tay, Loch Earn, Glen Ogle, Drummond Castle, Stirling, Linlithgow.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 1st October 1842.

YOUR MAJESTY,—Forgive this intrusion dictated by the demands of my heart. I must sincerely wish you happiness for what you have accomplished during your tour on the Rhine. The truly royal manner in which you so graciously received our island country-

¹ On 13th July the Duke of Orleans was on the road from Paris to Neuilly, when the horses bolted. He leaped out of the carriage and was killed. Through his sister he was related to the House of Coburg, being a brother of the wife of King Leopold.

² See Martin, vol. i, p. 147.

men¹ has been observed here with much satisfaction ; it puts the Queen and myself under a fresh obligation to you. Be so kind as to accept our joint thanks for it.

Our delightful, exciting tour through Scotland, which has a beauty all its own, passed off happily. That country deserves a visit by Your Majesty. On several occasions I was forced to reflect what an enjoyment such a visit would be to one of your spirit and nature. In the meantime I shall regard this idea as a seed, which I trust that the favour of the future may cause to develop.

The visit of my old friend at the University, Fritz Strelitz, gave me deep pleasure. There is talk of an engagement with our Princess Augusta, but we know nothing about it so far ; but if it is so, it will be a source of happiness to me that a new family relationship will be added to my older intimacy with Fritz.

To Your Majesty's gracious recommendation we owe a very enjoyable evening, when Herr Bohrer drew wonderful tones from his instrument. I regret from my heart that Your Majesty has lost from your service that exquisite musician.

To Baron von Stockmar.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 27th December 1842.

MY DEAR STOCKMAR,— . . . I cannot let the old year close without praising the foresight which during its course has arranged so much for my advantage, and without again seeing in the results a sacred duty, zealously to use the position I have been placed in for the good of all around me, and to lay out like a treasure at interest the experience I have gained. Let me once more thank you for much loyal concern for the welfare of us all, for much trouble and fatherly counsel in many moments of difficulty. When I look back I see nothing which I could wish otherwise ; but when I look forward, I feel that much remains to be done to bring matters to a satisfactory issue. . . .

We have reached a critical transition-period, in which seeds with a noble purpose may daily be sown. Still I feel the necessity for the wise counsel and support of a man of experience. When you left us, you said to me, “When you really want me, write, and I will come.” I am well aware of what you are to your family, and

¹ British officers who were attending military manœuvres at Coblenz.

² See Martin, vol. i, p. 154.

your own concerns, and I have therefore been unwilling till now to importune you to return so soon. But now the moment is come, when I think I may venture to remind you of your promise ; therefore do not delay. My attention hitherto has been directed to a host of trifles. It always seems to me as if an infinitude of small trivialities hang about me like an ever present weight ; I mean by these the domestic and Court arrangements, and to these I have chiefly applied myself, feeling that we never shall be in a position to occupy ourselves with higher and graver things, so long as we have to deal with these trifles. . . . ALBERT.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 16th Feb. 1843.—There is certainly a great charm, as well as deep interest in watching the development of feelings and faculties in a little child, and nothing is more instructive for the knowledge of our own nature, than to observe in a little creature the stages of development, which, when we were ourselves passing through them, seemed scarcely to have an existence for us. I feel this daily in watching our young offspring, whose characters are quite different, and who both show many lovable qualities.

I wish you more success than generally attends the education of poor children of the lower ranks by persons of our own ; and I cannot but warn you against a mistake often committed under similar circumstances, i.e. forgetting that education is the preparation for the future life, and that, if it be not consistent with the pupil's *prospects*, he may have to pay for the pleasure, which his education gives you, with the happiness of his whole life, as nothing is more certain to ensure an unhappy future than disappointed expectations.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 26th April 1843.

YOUR MAJESTY,—Your Majesty's friendship for the Queen and myself assures me that you will be interested to hear the news that the Queen was delivered yesterday at 4 in the morning of a healthy daughter,² and that both are perfectly well. With respectful

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 164.

² Princess Alice, later Grand Duchess of Hesse.

messages to Her Majesty the Queen, I seize the opportunity of this event, so full of rejoicing to us, to renew the expression of our deepest veneration and devotion. . . .

To the Same.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 18th August 1843.

YOUR MAJESTY,—I must excuse myself to Your Majesty for replying so tardily to Your Majesty's gracious letter, which Professor Hensel handed to me. I delayed purposely so as to be able to report to you the success of the work which that clever artist undertook at Your Majesty's command, and with which I hope Your Majesty will be satisfied. Victoria recognises in Your Majesty's wish to possess the picture a further proof of your friendly thought.

We felt deeply for Your Majesty and your family in the loss sustained by you through the death of Prince Augustus.¹ The sympathy universally shown is a proof of the respect and love which were felt for the deceased.

Victoria commissions me to ask Your Majesty's gracious permission to be allowed to bestow on Prince William, Your Majesty's uncle, the Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath as a proof of their high regard for that distinguished prince, and of recognition of his glorious efforts in a battle² in which God brought success to the allied armies of your Kingdom and of England, and by a brilliant victory permitted peace to be restored, under the blessings of which Europe has been flourishing and prospering now for 28 years. Your permission will give her great pleasure.

I have only good to report to Your Majesty of the health and advancing development of our little family. Now that a very long and thorny Session of Parliament has come to an end, we are thinking of making a short cruise at sea. Owing to Mr. O'Connell's agitation³ we have been obliged to give up an earlier plan of visiting Ireland this autumn, and shall have to limit our cruise to the Channel.

¹ Son of Prince Ferdinand of Prussia, brother of Frederick the Great, and himself a brother of Prince Louis Ferdinand.

² Prince William of Prussia, a brother of King Frederick William III, had distinguished himself at Belle Alliance [Waterloo] as leader of the cavalry, held in reserve, of Blücher's Corps.

³ O'Connell was agitating to set aside the Union of England and Ireland. He was a born agitator, and his mass meetings caused great excitement in the country.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 24th Sept. 1843.—Our travels are now over, and have left behind them in our minds a most agreeable impression. Never have I seen such enthusiasm as the Belgians showed us at every step, and such a show of sentiment is bound to be of great service to our Uncle. The delight at our visit was so combined with the national feeling, that it afforded a fresh guarantee for the continuance of the present state of things. The old cities of Flanders had put on their fairest array, and were very tastefully decorated with tapestries, flowers, trees, pictures, &c., &c., which, combined with the numerous old monuments, churches and convents, and the gay crowds of people, produced a most striking effect.

Victoria was greatly interested and impressed ; and the cordiality and friendliness which met us everywhere could not fail to attract her towards the Belgian people.

We found Uncle and Aunt very well, and greatly delighted at our visit. The children are blooming. Little Charlotte² is quite the prettiest child you ever saw Leopold and Philippe are very tall for their age, and quite strong and vigorous. ALBERT.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 9th November 1843.

YOUR MAJESTY,—I deeply share Your Majesty's regret over the late sad events in Greece.³ The British public do not share these feelings ; they count a "glorious Revolution" as one of the finest achievements in their own history. The Government feel deeply their responsibility for these events, in that they casually let time slip by, and did not press for fulfilment of the promise of a Constitution, which was given to the Greek nation at the time when the Greek Kingdom was set up. I cannot conceal from Your Majesty my belief that, apart from the breach of this promise, much provocation was offered to the Greek nation. A really good national Greek Government would have made the people forget that they had no representation. But not only has King Otho's Government failed

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 184.

² Later the wife of the Archduke Maximilian of Austria, Emperor of Mexico.

³ In September King Otho, of the House of Wittelsbach, was forced by his rebellious subjects to grant a constitution on the two-Chamber basis.

to show efficiency, but it has also shown an anti-national spirit by allowing the Greeks but a very small share in it. They are very pleased here with the conduct of Sir E. Lyons¹ who, seeing whither the tendencies of King Otho and his advisers were bound to lead, had frequently given warnings ; and King Otho himself seems also to be pleased with him, since he called Sir Edmund his only real friend in front of the whole Court, saying that if he had followed his advice earlier he would have overcome his present embarrassments. The King's only course now is to keep his word, and I adjure Your Majesty to use all possible influence to convince the King of the absolute necessity of this. Unfortunately Kolokotronis' recent experiment is in itself a blow to the nation's confidence in the King's good faith. I can reassure Your Majesty that here everything will be done to ensure that the new Constitution shall be "a reasonable and possible" one.

Lord Aberdeen has given Sir E. Lyons strict instructions to use every effort to prevent the title "King of Greece" being altered to "King of the Greeks," so that the ordering of the succession may suffer the least possible disturbance. Guizot and Aberdeen are in agreement about the Constitution ; they hold that the monarchical principle must be maintained as strongly as possible, and the greatest power possible be given to the Executive, and that the first of the two Chambers to be summoned must consist of life-members, to be nominated by the King.

We celebrate to-day the second birthday of your little godson ; I rejoice to be able to report to Your Majesty that he is advancing and developing satisfactorily. This morning he was greeted by a *Feu de Joie* from the troops ; it gave him great pleasure, for he passionately admires all soldiers.

To Baron von Stockmar.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 17th Dec. 1843.—The children in whose welfare you take so kindly an interest are making most favourable progress. The eldest, "Pussy," is now quite a little personage. She speaks English and French with great fluency and choice of

¹ Admiral Edmund Lyons (later Lord Lyons), 1790–1858, left the Navy and served in the Diplomatic Service between 1840 and 1853. In the Crimean War he was second in command of the Black Sea Fleet.

² See Martin, vol. i, p. 195.



Promenade of the Royal Family in the Palace Gardens, 1844

H.M. The Queen, Prince Albert, The Prince of Wales, The Princess Royal,
and Princess Alice

phrase. . . . The little gentleman is grown much stronger than he was. . . . The youngest is the beauty of the family, and is an extraordinarily good and merry child. . . .

Ireland is to all appearances perfectly quiet at present. Everything, however, is being got ready for the struggle in the Queen's Bench. . . .

Our visit to Drayton has made the Premier very happy, and is calculated to strengthen his position.

I went from there to Birmingham to see its manufactures. Sir James Graham and others had advised me strongly not to go, as the town is entirely in the hands of the Chartists, and even the Radicals dare not show themselves in it. Nevertheless, I was received with an indescribable enthusiasm. The people regarded the visit as a great proof of confidence, and did all they could to give assurance of their loyalty. In short, our excursion was one unbroken triumph.

The Queen Dowager was at Drayton, and some of the Ministers. At Chatsworth there was a large and brilliant assemblage of the leading Whigs, and at Belvoir of the fashionable hunting men of Melton and Leicester. Here I took part in a regular fox-hunt, had a capital run, and moreover distinguished myself by keeping well up with the hounds all through. Anson and Bouverie both fell on my left and right, whilst I came off with a whole skin. . . .

Now to come back to sacred matters. The day after to-morrow the Chapel is to be consecrated, and by the Bishop of Oxford. . . .
ALBERT.

To the Duke of Wellington.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 13th Jan. 1844.—. . . Unquestionably the power to punish is there; but it seems almost an injustice to make use of it, so long as no other protection for the honour of officers is provided. Taken in the abstract, honour is invulnerable. It is a treasure no one can take from us, and which we ourselves cannot wound. No act of a third person can rob us of it. But there is an honour which rests entirely on the world's opinion, and therefore is dependent on others. A man whose honour (in this sense of the word) has been insulted, must possess some means whereby he can recover the treasure that has been taken from him, and reinstate himself in the opinion of the world. In old days the

appeal to the sword was the recognised means. But as civilisation advanced and Christianity gained influence, this unchristian and barbarian custom became universally condemned, prohibited by law, and severely punished ; but no substitute was offered, and the officer, whose whole existence rests upon honour, had but two alternatives to choose from, either to overstep the law of religion and the State and become a criminal, or to lose his professional honour in the eyes of his fellow-officers and the world, and to see that, which is his pride, besmirched. A sense of justice demands examination of some other means to be provided, seeing that the only means at present recognised has to be prosecuted with the full force of the law.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 4th February 1844.

DEAR STOCKMAR,—My heart impels me to give vent to my tears upon the bosom of a true and loving friend. I have sustained a terrible loss, and can as yet scarcely believe it. I fancy I still hear your prophetic words ringing in my ears, that my poor father would die suddenly.² So it has proved. God will give us all strength to bear the blow becomingly. That we were separated gives it a peculiar poignancy. Not to see him, not to be present to close his eyes, not to help to comfort those he leaves behind, and to be comforted by them, is very hard. Here we sit together, poor Mama, Victoria, and myself, and weep, with a great cold public around us, insensible as stone. To have some true sympathetic friends at hand would be a great solace. Come to us in this time of trouble, if come you can.

With him it is well. I share your belief that his would have been a dreary old age ; and even were not my faith strong in the Providence which shapes all things for our good, I should find consolation in this. Still for us the loss is terrible. The parent stem has been levelled by the storm, and the branches, which are scattered all over the world, must now strike separate roots for themselves. May love, friendship, harmony keep them all together ! For me the father's house is for ever closed ; that house, it did me good to think, I might return to upon occasion. The sweet feeling

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 202.

² Duke Ernest I, died on 29th January, 1844.

that thought inspired I shall never know again. This reflection shakes me to the centre.

This shall not weaken my love for my bereft native land. I will help Ernest with heart and hand in the difficult task to which he is called. Unfortunately, I am greatly hampered by being so far away. How much need has poor Grandmama of consolation, who has now lost her last friend ! And poor desolate Mama ! The good Alexandrine seems to me in the whole picture like the consoling angel. Just such is Victoria to me, who feels and shares my grief, and is the treasure on which my whole existence rests. The relation in which we stand to one another leaves nothing to desire. It is a union of heart and soul, and is therefore noble, and in it the poor children shall find their cradle, so as to be able one day to ensure a like happiness for themselves.

Outside there is still much to do, and I long greatly for your wise and faithful counsel.

The world is assuredly not our true happiness ; and, alas ! every day's experience forces me to see how wicked men are. Every imaginable calumny is heaped upon us, especially upon me ; and although a pure nature, conscious of its own high purposes, is and ought to be lifted above attacks, still it is painful to be misrepresented by people of whom one believed better things. ALBERT.

To the Same.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 9th February 1844.

DEAR STOCKMAR,—We are all well, and getting used by degrees to the thought that Papa is no more, which at first seemed to us hardly believable. I have regained my composure, and will set to work to fortify myself by constant activity, to which I have not been able to brace myself hitherto. A new epoch has commenced in my life, not indeed in action and aim, but in my emotional life. My youth, with all the recollections linked with it, has been buried with him around whom they centred. From that world I am forcibly torn away, and my whole thoughts diverted to my life and my own separate family. For these I will live wholly from this time forth, and be to it the father whose loss I mourn for myself. In the free fresh courage requisite for this, I have, however, been disturbed so long as my

thoughts reverted anxiously and sadly to the dear ones left behind at my native home. I will, therefore, at once close accounts there, and set about putting the machine into a state in which it may go working on for the future. . . .

These considerations have decided me to go over. Ten to twelve days are enough to despatch the whole business, and I esteem it a sacred duty to devote them to it. Victoria is of the same mind, and urges me to the step. At Easter Parliament rises for ten days, in which all the world leaves town, and these days I have set apart for the purpose. I have requested Uncle Leopold to permit good Aunt Louise to give her companionship to poor Victoria during my absence ; perhaps to come with her himself, and I doubt not he will comply with our wish. ALBERT.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 24th February 1844.

YOUR MAJESTY,—Your Majesty's most gracious and kindly letter has brought much relief to Victoria's wounded heart and to mine also. You know from experience the fulness of grief that overwhelms the soul at the separation in this life from the parent who begot us and developed the first germ of life, tended it with care, and rejoiced in its blossoming, and the pain that we can only express our gratitude with our tears. My family has suffered a terrible loss ; it was a tempest shattering the stem of the tree. Scattered as we are in different parts of the world, the centre by which we were united in love is destroyed. We must however submit to God's will in piety and resignation, and put our trust in the wisdom of His decrees. What distresses me particularly is the desolate state of my step-mother, and the difficult situation of my brother, who is now left all alone at home with the great task of replacing him who was so much beloved by the country. I may be able, I think, to take the 8 or 10 days of the Parliamentary recess at Easter for a hasty visit to Coburg and Gotha, in the hope of comforting and helping. The time is of course short, but now that means of communication are daily improving, the journey can be made in an unbelievably short space. I regret that lack of time will make it impossible to pay a visit to Your Majesty, which would have given me very great gratification.

To Queen Victoria.¹

S.S. "PRINCESS ALICE," DOVER HARBOUR, 28th March 1844.

MY OWN DARLING,—We have got over our journey thus far rapidly and well, but the tide has been so unmannerly as to be an hour later than the calculated time, so that I cannot sail before three. Nevertheless, Smithett promises to deposit me at Ostend by half-past seven. I have been here about an hour, and regret the lost time which I might have spent with you. Poor child! you will, while I write, be getting ready for luncheon, and you will find a place vacant where I sat yesterday. In your heart, however, I hope my place will not be vacant. I at least have you on board with me in spirit.

I reiterate my entreaty, "Bear up!" and do not give way to low spirits, but try to occupy yourself as much as possible. You are even now half a day nearer to seeing me again; by the time you get this letter you will be a whole one—thirteen more, and I am again within your arms.

The railroad is wonderful, especially that part of it between this and Folkestone. I have gone through part of the fortifications with some of the commanding officers, and am now writing in a handsome cabin on board the *Princess Alice*. They are on the point of raising the anchor, which makes a hideous clatter.

Our party is complete. Sydow also has met us. The sun shines brightly, and the sea looks quite calm. To-morrow Seymour will bring you further news of me. Your most devoted, ALBERT.

To the Same.

OSTEND, 28th March 1844.

DEAR LITTLE ONE, . . . I cannot go to bed without writing two words more. I occupy your old room, and have just come from dinner, at which General D'Haue, Sir H. Seymour, Colonel de la Place, and the Burgomaster were present. We had a rather unpleasant passage. I kept my seat on one spot all the way with my eyes shut, but I was far from easy in my mind, and I arrived at half-past eight stiff with cold.

It is now close on eleven, I am sleepy, and must therefore conclude. My prayers are with you. . . .

¹ See Martin, vol. i, pp. 206 *et seq.*

COLOGNE, 29th March.—Safe in Cologne, my first act is to assure you of the fact. The journey was accomplished in eleven hours from point to point, and was in every way propitious. Uncle Leopold joined us at Malines, and went with us as far as Verviers. He looks well, and hopes to be with you by Tuesday. The railroad from Liége to Aix-la-Chapelle is wonderfully beautiful. Everywhere I receive attention from the authorities. Here in old Cologne, where I was so often in my student days, I cut a truly comical figure in my own eyes. I have put up at the Imperial Hotel. Your picture has been hung up everywhere, and been very prettily wreathed with laurel, so that you will look down from the walls upon my *tête-à-tête* with Bouverie (the Prince's equerry).

I have just heard that the snow will prevent my making the journey by way of Cassel. News exactly the reverse reach me from another source, at which you will be surprised; but I saw the chief post-office official, and have despatched Dehler with the *fourgon* to bespeak horses for me.

COLOGNE, 30th March.—Six a.m. Just up. . . . The day is fine, and about seven I shall cross the Rhine by the bridge of boats. Every step takes me farther from you—not a cheerful thought.

To the Same.

GOTHA, 31st March 1844.

DEAR, DEAR CHILD,—I arrived in Gotha safely about two hours since. Ernest came to meet me some miles out of town, and we alighted together at Grandmama's. Her delight is not to be described. It made me quite nervous for her. Alexandrine was there. Mama and Ernest Württemberg came shortly after, and completed our dinner-party. I find Grandmama visibly altered; her deafness somewhat increased, but in all other respects the same true, warm, loving nature, by which she is so pre-eminently distinguished. Mama has grown much stouter, and at the same time looks older. She wears the black point and the long veil of a German widow. . . . Your gifts have excited the greatest delight and admiration.

Oh! how many varied emotions overwhelm me! remembrance, sorrow, joy, all these together produce a peculiar sadness. Tomorrow I shall make the trying visit to the Palace. I shudder at the

thought of it. Could you have witnessed the happiness my return gave my family, you would have been amply repaid for the sacrifice of our separation. We spoke much of you. So many questions are put to me, that I am scarcely able to answer them.

Now I am rather tired after my night journey and the exhausting incidents of the day, so I shall make haste to bed. Farewell, my darling, and fortify yourself with the thought of my speedy return. God's blessing rest upon you and the dear children !

To the Same.

GOTHA, 2nd April 1844.

DEAR, GOOD LITTLE ONE,—I am getting these lines ready for the courier, whom I expect to-morrow or the next day. What joy it will be for me to get news of you and to see your dear hand-writing. May the news be good, and you not sad.

I made the sad visit to the Palace to-day, which much oppressed me. Everything is as it was, but the Palace stood gloomy and empty, and all the rooms were shown me as if I was a stranger, the rooms in which I spent my youth under the eye of my departed father. . . . The good Grandmama is extremely grateful to you. . . .

P.S.—I am rather tired with people who all want to come for only a moment. . . . Not to mortify them, I have had to consent to hold a levee at the Palace to-morrow. The ladies had all set their hearts upon coming as well, but upon this I put a negative. Yes ! I receive many undoubted proofs of affection and attachment. I went to-day with Ernest and Ernest Württemberg to Reinhardtsbrunn, a very mournful excursion. Papa was so fond of the place, it was his last creation. I enclose an auricula and a pansy, which I gathered for you at Reinhardtsbrunn. Here in the little garden there is absolutely nothing that I could bring away for you. . . .

I purpose going to Coburg by way of Meiningen, and seeing the Duke *en passant*, so as to give him news of Queen Adelaide. Here I conclude my chronicle for the day, announcing that I have got toys for the children, and porcelain views for you, and that I have also procured whatever engravings and lithographs were to be had. Now good night, little grass-widow.

GOTHA, 3rd April 1844.—How I have been delighted by your dear letter, which your courier brought me this morning : he shall be

sent back to you this very evening. I was sure you would feel rather downcast and forlorn, still I was glad to see how well you fought against it. I cannot be grateful enough to the kind Aunt [Louise] for having supported you so well. Your dear words have done me so much good, and you need never fear writing me too much or at too great length. I am most grateful to Peel for his letter. The courier is now *finalement* departing. I send you a few sugar Easter eggs. Now good-bye. You will soon hear from me by Benda, and then I shall be at home with you. Ever your faithful,
ALBERT.

To Queen Victoria.

KALENBERG, 5th April.—I write to you to-day from the Kalenberg, where we arrived safely yesterday about eight. This morning is again bright and glorious. Oh! how lovely and friendly is this dear old country, how glad I should be to have my little wife beside me, that I might share my pleasure with her! Ernest has arranged everything in really splendid style, and the greatest elegance pervades the place.

Immediately after breakfast I shall hurry into town, to visit many dear spots, and alas! to see many people also. About two we shall go to the St. Moritz Church, where the Passion Music of old Graun is to be given. How often have I heard it on Good Friday with poor Papa.

Our journey was a very rapid one. The parting was a severe trial to good Grandmama. She is so very kind and loving to me. I alighted for a moment at Oberhof, to take another look at Papa's favourite shooting lodge. My reception at Meiningen was most cordial. . . . Stockmar, who left Coburg yesterday, had been in Meiningen some hours before, but had travelled on without waiting for me. I hope he will be with you all the sooner. Here I stop to go to breakfast.

Before going to bed let me add a word about to-day's doings. I started early for the town, where I saw a great many people. The Palace produced a terribly depressing effect upon me. . . . Coburg has marvellously grown in beauty. About two we went with Mama, Alexandrine, and Ernest to the town church. The beautiful devotional singing of the congregation, as well as the admirable sermon of General-Superintendent Gensler, moved me to tears.

After Church we visited the Festung, and Papa's last beautiful creation there ; and afterwards we rode to the Eckhardsberg, which our lost one had selected for his burial-place. Now good night, my sweetheart.

To the Same.

COBURG, 6th April 1844.—I have this morning received your letter by the hands of Benda. He is to take his departure again forthwith, so as to be able (perhaps) to be with you a day sooner than myself. I can therefore spare time for only two words to say that I am well ; that I will start for England the day after to-morrow, and expect to reach Windsor by Thursday evening. I shall probably have a few minutes' conversation at Bamberg with the Crown Prince of Bavaria. Charles is to meet me at Mayence. I was at the Rosenau to-day, and send you the enclosed flowers from there. We dine here with Mama to-day. To-morrow I hold a levee, and then hurry back to you, dear little wife, your faithful husband, ALBERT.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 6th August 1844.

YOUR MAJESTY,—Your Majesty will be glad to hear that this morning a few minutes before 8 Victoria was successfully delivered of a fine strong boy.¹ Mother and son are well, thank God. With feelings of the truest respect and devotion, I am Your Majesty's faithful and devoted cousin, ALBERT.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.²

BLAIR CASTLE,³ 22nd Sept. 1844.—. . . We are all well, and live a somewhat primitive, yet romantic, mountain life, that acts as a tonic to the nerves, and gladdens the heart of a lover like myself of field sports and of Nature. Pussy's cheeks are on the point of bursting, they have grown so red and plump ; she is learning Gaelic, but makes wild work with the names of the mountains.

¹ Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, from 1893 to 1900 Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

² See Martin, vol. i, p. 234.

³ Blair Atholl, the seat of Lord Glenlyon, afterwards Duke of Atholl, in Perthshire.

We leave on the 1st, and expect by 6 p.m. on the 3rd to reach Windsor, where, after a preliminary training on the sea, the bold deer-stalking mountaineer will have to transform himself into a courtier, to receive and *fêter* a King of the French, and play the part of a staid and astute diplomatist.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 10th May 1845.

DEAR STOCKMAR,—Here we are at the Whitsun holidays, when the weary combatants in Parliament and the tired-out epicureans fly from town for a little fresh air. We do the same, exhausted partly by business, partly by the so-called social pleasures, and are off at noon to-day to the Isle of Wight with Charles (Prince Leiningen), who has been with us for four days, and the two oldest children. Osborne is bought, and, with some adjoining farms, which we have also bought, makes a domain of 1,500 acres in a ring fence.

The religious warfare continues, but Peel is a gainer by the lengthened duration of the debate, which is now adjourned to the 19th, as the excitement, which has been in a great measure produced by extraneous stimulants, will not hold out so long.

The weather is frightfully cold and disagreeable, still both crops and grass promise well.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

ANTWERP, 10th Aug. 1845.—Herr von Arnim has delivered to me Your Majesty's gracious letter, and I hasten to express my very sincere thanks to Your Majesty for it, and at the same time to announce our safe arrival at the Port of Antwerp. We start off very early to-morrow (7 o'clock) and look forward impatiently to the pleasure of presenting ourselves before Your Majesty and the Queen. You will be able to gauge the feelings which stir my German bosom at the thought of setting foot on German soil under such very special circumstances! We shall gratefully seize the opportunity of this journey to pay homage to the Emperor Charlemagne on our way [at Aix-la-Chapelle].²

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 265.

² This was Queen Victoria's first visit to Germany.

*To Baron von Stockmar.*¹

COBURG, 24th Aug. 1845.—The visit to the Rhine, except for unceasing rain, was very pleasant, and our reception brilliant and hearty. Victoria seems to have pleased everybody, and is herself satisfied and extremely interested in all she sees or has seen. The mass of Royal personages, who stream in from all sides, is somewhat oppressive, although their *empressement* cannot be otherwise than flattering. Here everything up to the present time has been a complete success— simple, hearty, and in good taste.

*To Dr. Wilberforce, Dean of Westminster.*²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 19th October 1845.

MY DEAR DEAN,—I had intended to commit to paper for you my views on the position of a Bishop in the House of Lords, but gave up the idea, fearing that it might appear presumptuous on my part. Anson, however, tells me that he is sure you would not consider it as such, and would be pleased if I were still to do it; I accordingly resume the pen.

A Bishop ought to abstain *completely* from mixing himself up with the politics of the day, and beyond giving a general support to the *Queen's Government*, and occasionally voting for it, should take no part in the discussion of State affairs (for instance, Corn Laws, Game Laws, Trade or Financial questions, &c., &c.); but he should come forward whenever the interests of Humanity are at stake, and give boldly and manfully his advice to the House and Country (I mean questions like Negro Emancipation, education of the people, improvement of the health of towns, measures for the recreation of the poor, against cruelty to animals, for regulating factory labour, &c., &c.).

As to religious affairs, he cannot but take an active part in them; but let that always be the part of a *Christian*, not of a mere *Churchman*. Let him never forget the insufficiency of human knowledge and wisdom, and the impossibility for any man, or even Church, to say, “I am right, and I alone am right.” Let him, therefore, be meek, and liberal, and tolerant to other confessions; but let him never forget that he is a representative of the Church of the Land, the

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 289.

² On appointment as Bishop of Oxford. See Martin, vol. ii, p. 133.

maintenance of which is as important to the country as that of its Constitution or its Throne. Let him, here, always be conscious that the Church has duties to fulfil, that it does not exist for itself, but for the people, for the country, and that it ought to have no higher aim than to be the Church of the people. Let there be, therefore, no calling for new rights, privileges, grants, &c., but show the zeal and capacity of the Church to stretch her powers and capabilities to the utmost for the fulfilment of her sacred duties to the people, in ministering and teaching. A Bishop ought to be uniformly a peace-maker, and, when he can, it is his duty to lessen political and other animosities, and remind the Peers of their duties as Christians. He ought to be a guardian of public morality, not, like the press, by tediously interfering with every man's private affairs, speaking for applause, or trampling on those that are fallen, but by watching over the morality of the State in acts which expediency or hope for profit may tempt it to commit, as well in home and colonial as in foreign affairs.

He should likewise boldly admonish the public even against its predominant feeling, if this be contrary to the purest standard of morality (reproving, for instance, the recklessness and the wickedness of the Projectors of Railway schemes, who, having no funds themselves, acquire riches at the expense of others, their dupes). Here the nation is in the greatest danger, as every individual gets corrupted, and every sense of shame is lost.

In this way the Bishops would become a powerful force in the Lords, and the country would feel that their presence there supplies a great want, and is a great protection to the people.

I have spoken as thoughts have struck me, and am sure you will be better able than I am to take a comprehensive view of the position. Ever yours truly, ALBERT.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.¹

25th Dec. 1845.—We are *seelenfroh* (glad in soul), as they say in Coburg, or still more frequently, *ganz fidel* (in high glee), that we have survived a Ministerial crisis of fourteen days' duration, and are now standing exactly where we stood before—upon our feet,

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 312.

whereas during the crisis we were very nearly standing on our heads.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 6th January 1846.

DEAR STOCKMAR,—I believe that the crisis,² now past, has been a source of real advantage to the Crown, by producing a widely spread feeling that amid all the general confusion and heat of party at least one person has remained calm and free from party spirit, this person being the Queen. The very Radical *Examiner* had a very remarkable article on the subject, in which it brought prominently forward the advantage for the country of the existence of a third power so free from partisanship.³ Our travels on the Continent, too, have made the impression general, that the *personal* appearance of the Sovereign in foreign countries secures the friendship of those countries for the English nation, and in particular, that to the personal friendship between Victoria and Louis Philippe is to be ascribed the maintenance so much desired of peace between France and England. These are certainly very cheering, if only moderate, strides in policy, domestic and foreign.

Had we not also to secure the *moral dignity* of the Court? This basis has been obtained. To my mind, the exaltation of Royalty is possible only through the personal character of the Sovereign. When a person enjoys complete confidence, we desire for him more power also and influence in the conduct of affairs. But confidence is of slow growth.

The opening of Parliament will be very interesting, and many may be the storms that await us.

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 315.

² Sir Robert Peel went out of office in December, 1845, and after long negotiations Lord John Russell declared his readiness to form a fresh Government. He was, however, unsuccessful and Peel returned to power.

³ The following is obviously the passage to which the Prince refers. It occurs in the *Examiner* of 27th December, 1845. "In the pranks and bunglings of the last three weeks, there is one part which, according to all report, has been played most faultlessly—that of a Constitutional Sovereign. In the pages of history the directness, the sincerity, the scrupulous observance of constitutional rules, which have marked Her Majesty's conduct in circumstances the most trying will have their place of honour. Unused as we are to deal in homage to royalty, we must add, that never, we believe, was the heart of a monarch so warmly devoted to the interests of a people, and with so enlightened a sense of their interests." The article of which this forms a part is in the brilliant and bitter style of Mr. Albany Fonblanque, and it is especially conspicuous for that rancorous injustice to Sir Robert Peel which its writer lived to regret.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 1st April 1846.

YOUR MAJESTY,—Your Majesty has honoured me with a very gracious letter, and also given me very great pleasure by your present of a magnificent pair of pistols. Permit me to express my sincere thanks. The decoration on these weapons is remarkably tasteful and rich, and does great honour to Your Majesty's artificers. They are almost too beautiful to be allowed to bear witness to my skill in target practice. Your Majesty's kindness to my brother has laid Victoria and myself under a further obligation of gratitude. We share your regret that he did not take Alexandrine to Berlin, and have informed him of our feeling, especially as he has now taken her on a tour to Spain and Portugal, a trip which we cannot regard as a happily conceived idea. The dangerous incidents in Poland have now, thank Heaven, come to an end, and this will relieve you of a heavy anxiety. All the details about it that have come to our ears have naturally caused us deep distress.

We have received splendid news from India, where the victories of Aliwal and Sobraon completed the earlier ones, about which Your Majesty evinced such kindly interest. They have brought about a peace which promises new strength, solidity and lasting power to the Indian Empire. Once again your cousin, Prince Valdemar, has won for himself well merited appreciation and admiration, and proved himself a worthy scion of your House. I venture to express my sincere congratulations to yourself and also to Prince William. Sir Henry Hardinge has most deservedly been created a Peer as Viscount Hardinge, with the choice of describing himself as of Moodkee, Ferozeshah, Sobraon or Lahore.¹ Sir Hugh Gough is Baron Gough (and a Peer) and Sir Harry Smith a Baronet. They have all proved themselves true heroes, and Sir Henry Hardinge is a great man in every sense of the word. I am convinced that in the Prussian Army also interest will be taken in his renown.

Our political problems are still far from being solved. The struggle is being conducted with much bitterness, and Sir Robert numbers only 112 genuine adherents out of 658 members of the House of Commons, and this includes the 40 Ministerial members.

¹ Lahore was chosen.

It is all very sad. He will force through his measures, but this will lead us into a labyrinth from which no one is competent to find the way out. It displays one of the darker sides of our much vaunted Constitution.

Memorandum.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 3rd April 1846.—I saw this day Sir R. Peel, and showed him a memorandum, which I had drawn up respecting our conversation of the 30th.

It filled six sheets, and contained, as minutely as I could render it, the whole of the arguments we had gone through. Sir Robert read it through and over again, and, after a long pause, said : " I was not aware when I spoke to your Royal Highness that my words would be taken down, and don't acknowledge that this is a fair representation of my opinion." He was visibly uneasy, and added, if he knew that what he said would be committed to paper, he would speak differently, and give his opinion with all the circumspection and reserve which a Minister ought to employ when he gave responsible advice ; but he had in this instance spoken quite unreservedly, like an advocate defending a point in debate, and then he had taken another and tried to carry this as far as it would go, in order to give me an opportunity of judging of the different bearings of the question. He did so often in the Cabinet, when they discussed important questions, and was often asked : " Well, then, you are quite against this measure ? " " Not at all, but I want that the counter argument should be gone into to the fullest extent, in order that the Cabinet should not take a one-sided view."

He viewed the existence of such a paper with much uneasiness, as it might appear as if he had left this before going out of office in order to prepossess the Queen against the measures, which her future Minister might propose to her, and so lay secretly the foundation of his fall. The existence of such a paper might cause great embarrassment to the Queen ; if she followed the advice of a Minister who proposed measures hostile to the Irish Church, it might be said, she knew what she undertook, for Sir R. Peel had warned her and left on record the serious objections that attached to the measure.

I said that I felt it to be of the greatest importance to possess

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. ii, p. 90.

his views on the question, but that I thought I would not have been justified in keeping a record of our conversation without showing it to him, and asking him whether I had rightly understood him ; but if he felt a moment's uneasiness about this memorandum, I would at once destroy it, as I was anxious that nothing should prevent his speaking without the slightest reserve to me in future as he had done heretofore. I felt that these open discussions were of the greatest use to me in my endeavour to investigate the different political questions of the day and to form a conclusive opinion upon them. As Sir Robert did not say a word to dissuade me, I took it as an affirmative, and threw the memorandum into the fire, which, I could see, relieved Sir Robert. ALBERT.

To Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 26th May 1846.

DEAR ERNEST,--- . . . Things being as they are, you will understand how sorry we are not to be able to fall in with your wish to take us on your way. There is a second point : the offer made by Queen Cristina. This has placed us in a very embarrassing position. We had promised France that if the King kept his word and refrained from thrusting forward either of his sons, we should use our influence to bring about a Bourbon marriage, which would meet the wishes of the King and Queen Cristina and be popular in Spain at the same time. We have at the same time declared that we do not admit the right of France to dictate to the Spaniards in any way whatever regarding the marriage of Queen Isabella ; that we should support Spain's independent right to manage her own affairs, and that, supposing a Bourbon marriage proved unacceptable in Spain in spite of our efforts to bring it about, then any other marriage would be entirely approved by us, given that it was desired in Spain.

This marriage was on the point of coming to pass when the Bourbons became impossible, and a Spanish declaration to that effect would have solved the difficulty. Then Bulwer¹ permitted himself to be a party to a step taken by Queen Cristina, which she did not venture to take by herself on account of King Louis Philippe.

¹ Henry Lytton Bulwer, afterwards Lord Dalling. He allowed the Queen to send by his messenger a letter proposing marriage with Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg.

It lays us open to suspicions of perfidiousness, intrigue and faithlessness, &c., &c. ; to the French it offers just grounds for complaint. We have been forced to wash our hands of the matter and to tell the French that we have had nothing whatever to do with the step taken. Naturally we are not believed, and your journey to Spain, for which no motive can be stated, and moreover with Uncle Ferdinand there at the same time, is a factor which tells only too badly against us.

There is only one way to ensure success for the marriage with Leopold, and that is for France to come in with us *de bon cœur* ; otherwise, even if the matter is put through, the political future of Spain and Portugal will be in jeopardy. It is moreover important that France shall not appear to the world as having been overreached by us, which would wound her sensibilities as a nation ; the marriage should therefore as far as possible come before the world as a piece of work, arranged not by England, but by France. From this point of view your coming to England just now after what has happened, would destroy Leopold's prospects for ever.

There is no doubt whatever that for Spain Leopold would be by far the happiest choice, and France is bound to recognise this. It could be made a certainty if it could be combined with a marriage between Montpensier and the Infanta, and that is what we have to work for. It is not for me to judge whether it would be best for Leopold himself ; what matters is whether he has inclination and courage for the task. If so, the position, high, honourable, and powerful as it is, would be a good one for him ; if not, the inferior personal charms of the Queen, and the many political worries, will become an intolerable burden to him. Ferdinand will know most about this ; I believe he enjoys Leopold's confidence.

I end with a request that you may be so kind as to let Uncle Ferdinand and Ferdinand [cousin] read this letter, for I have no time to write a second copy of it for them.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 26th May 1846.

YOUR MAJESTY,—It gives me the greatest pleasure to be able to announce to Your Majesty that yesterday afternoon at 3 o'clock the Queen was safely delivered of a Princess.¹ The many proofs of friendship which Your Majesty has given to us assure me that you

¹ Princess Helena, afterwards wife of Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein.

will receive the news of this gladdening event with your former interest, and I seize this happy opportunity to express anew my unalterable respect and devotion to Your Majesty and the Queen. . . .

To the Same.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 18th June 1846.

YOUR MAJESTY,—I should hardly have ventured to send Your Majesty this little work of art, and to recommend to Your Majesty's gracious benevolence the artist Ludwig Gruner, who begs for permission to deliver it to you, had not Your Majesty shown us so many proofs of that friendly interest, which turns a kindly ear to things unimportant in themselves, but which are designed to promote cheerfulness and refreshment in the family circle. In decorating the pavilion in the Palace Gardens we were attracted by the thought of making a contribution towards solving the question whether painting in fresco could be transplanted and made to flourish on English soil. Herr Gruner, who possibly has the happiness of being already known to Your Majesty by his book on Italian fresco decoration, has been in charge of the work on the pavilion, and has recently done many good services to us in our love of art by his knowledge and skill.

To Queen Victoria.

LIVERPOOL,¹ 7.45 p.m., 30th July 1846.

DEAR SPONSA, — I write, hoping these lines, which go by the evening post, may reach you by breakfast-time to-morrow. As I write, you will be making your evening toilette, and not be ready in time for dinner. I must set about the same task, and not, let me hope, with the same result. I cannot get it into my head that there are 250 miles between us! I have done wonders of activity, as you will perhaps have learned from the papers by the time you receive this letter. The loyalty and enthusiasm of the inhabitants are great; but the heat is greater still. . . . I am satisfied that if the population of Liverpool had been weighed this morning, and were to be weighed again now, they would be found to be very considerably lighter. The docks are wonderful, and the mass of shipping incredible.

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 334. In May of this year the Prince had laid the foundation stone of the Sailors' Home for the port of London; and he was now asked to perform the same office for the port of Liverpool.

I must conclude, and enclose to end my letter two touching objects—a flower and a programme of the procession. Good-bye. May we soon meet and embrace each other again ! Your faithful, ALBERT.

To Lord Grey, Secretary for the Colonies.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 3rd August 1846.

MY DEAR LORD GREY,—The Queen wishes me to return you the enclosed letter. The subject of the Government of Canada is one which the Queen has much at heart. Canada has been for a long time, and may probably *still* be for the future, a source of great weakness to this Empire, and a number of experiments have been tried. It was in a very bad state before the Union, continually embarrassing the Home Government, and the Union has by no means acted as a remedy, but it may be said almost to have increased the difficulties. The only thing that has hitherto proved beneficial was the prudent, consistent, and impartial administration of Lord Metcalfe. Upon the continuance and consistent application of the system which he has laid down and acted upon, will depend, in the Queen's estimation, the future welfare of that province, and the maintenance of proper relations with the mother country. The Queen therefore is most anxious that in the appointment of a new Governor-General (for which post she thinks Lord Elgin very well qualified), regard should be had to securing an uninterrupted development of Lord Metcalfe's views. The Queen thought it the more her duty to make you acquainted with her sentiments upon this subject, because she thinks that additional danger arises from the impressions which the different agents of the different political parties in Canada try to produce upon the Home Government and the imperial Parliament, and from their desire to mix up Canadian *party* politics with general English *party* politics. Ever yours, etc., ALBERT.

To Lord Palmerston, Foreign Secretary.²

9th August 1846.

MY DEAR LORD PALMERSTON,—The Queen is much obliged for Lord Howard de Walden's private letter to you, and begs you will

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. ii, p. 111.

² See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. ii, p. 113.

never hesitate to send her such private communications, however unreserved they may be in their language, as our chief wish and aim is, by hearing all parties, to arrive at a just, dispassionate, and correct opinion upon the various political questions. This, however, entails a strict scrutiny of what is brought before us. . . .

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

OSBORNE, 11th Aug. 1846.—I must not delay longer in answering Your Majesty's gracious letter of 21st June and in thanking Your Majesty for the continuance of your greatly valued confidence. Sir Edmund Lyons'¹ case is a peculiar one. Lord Aberdeen had promised me, at the next opportunity that offered itself, to remove him from a place where he has been kept too long, and where his personal interest in the movements in the country has identified him so completely with one political party. In consequence he finds it difficult, if not impossible, to assume the unprejudiced and generally fair demeanour which a Power that wishes well to the Greek State and throne would wish to see adopted by its Representative. The obstacle to the fulfilment of that promise was the relations that developed between Sir Edmund and Piscatory, which produced a rivalry between the British and French Governments and made it impossible for the honour of either country to recall its Minister. Lord Aberdeen proposed that both should be recalled, but this fell to the ground owing to Guizot's fear of making an enemy of Piscatory, who might have been dangerous to him in the French Chamber. Lord Palmerston is now in a worse position than Lord Aberdeen was, for he has always supported the development of democratic institutions in Greece, and Lyons' chief efforts have been in that direction. Nevertheless he has promised me to give Lyons strict instructions not to allow his partisanship to place him in a position of hostility to any given Ministry in Greece, and to bear in mind that he represents a Government which elevated King Otho to the Greek Throne and desires to see him strong and happy in occupation of it.

Our new Ministry² has now settled down, and will, despite a minority of 100 votes, be able to wind up the Session without anxiety. All the prophets are silent about further prospects, for they feel the chances are too great of any prophecies being proved

¹ See p. 86.

² Lord John Russell's Liberal Cabinet.

wrong in the next twelve months and are afraid of appearing ridiculous. Your Majesty will appreciate my prudence in following their example.

I venture to recommend to Your Majesty a man who begs me to describe him to Your Majesty as one desirous of having the honour of being permitted to converse with you. He is Dr. List, the enemy of England and her trade. He now calls himself a friend, and states that he has always been a misunderstood friend, and has come to convince us that Germany needs a Protective Tariff ; and England ought to admit that fact and be glad to see it in practice. I was much interested in making his acquaintance, and was better able to follow his mental processes than the English could. It would be good for Germany as well as England, if this admittedly influential man could be given a view of the workings of the Zollverein from the Prussian point of view.

We are highly delighted with the prospect of soon seeing Princess Augusta on English soil. It is just a year since we were privileged to be present on your side at the unveiling of the Monument to Beethoven [at Bonn]. Victoria, who commends herself to you, thinks longingly of those delightful days.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

OSBORNE, March 1847.—Accept a thousand thanks for your dear letter of the 26th of last month, which you began with the best intentions of making it legible. I have to admit that *L'homme propose, Dieu dispose*, for it has not been the will of the gods that I should decipher the whole of it ; they shrouded my eyes with clouds, as occasionally happened to the heroes before Troy. I confess myself to you as being one who is not master of his fate, but has however so far conquered it as to make out that you are well ; as a loyal son I find ample compensation in this fact. Everyone has not been so lucky this winter. I at least cannot remember having ever seen so many ill people. This winter seems never coming to an end.

We betook ourselves here in the hope of getting a breath of spring among flowering myrtles, laurels and magnolias, but have found nothing but frost and a parching east wind ; the day before yesterday for a change we had a foot of snow.

I have in the meanwhile been made Chancellor of the University

of Cambridge, which has chosen me after a violent party struggle, in which I personally of course took no part.¹

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 2nd April 1847.

YOUR MAJESTY, --I must begin my letter by expressing my deep gratitude for the great, unrestricted and gracious confidence that you have shown me in your two letters. Indeed, I scarcely had a right to expect any reply to my latest lengthy epistle to Your Majesty, an epistle whose diffuseness and urgency were justified solely by the pressing character of the circumstances at the moment. Therefore I was deeply gratified and touched by a reply expressing such perfect friendliness, frankness and kindness, and moreover offering so complete an answer to my questions. Inspired by this feeling, I have decided to reply to Your Majesty without delay, and to imitate the brilliant qualities displayed in your letter--or at least one of them--namely, by replying as far as is in my power with absolute frankness and truthfulness.

There is no special need to assure Your Majesty that, in all our views and opinions on English policy, as well as on European and world policy connected with England, Victoria and I are one, as beseems two faithful married people. We learn, observe and feel concern together, and since we continually take pains to learn from the countless political events of each day, we are gradually amassing a treasure of political knowledge, which grows daily more valuable to us, and which we hope one day to hand down to the Prince of Wales, your dear god-son, as the best endowment for his future kingly office. If however in my communications to Your Majesty there appears, side by side with considerations concerning general world questions, a certain excess, as in my last letter, of purely British feeling, you will (knowing as I do your truly German sentiments) see in it, I am sure, in future nothing unseemly, but will freely admit, that, though I am incidentally the Queen of England's husband, I am also one German prince speaking to another.

It goes without saying that all such out-pourings, whether they

¹ When Lord Powis was put up as an opposition candidate, the Prince wished to withdraw his name. But his supporters, among whom Trinity College was largely represented, were not in a temper to accept the triumph of a rival College (St. John's), which had put forward Lord Powis. The Prince was elected by 953 votes to 837, on 27th February, 1847.

come from Your Majesty or are addressed to you, are to be treated by us both with the strictest secrecy, and to be withheld from every one, including our Governments. This applies to my last letter to you. And assuming that similar secrecy on our part is your Majesty's one and only condition governing continuance of this confidential exchange of ideas, which will undoubtedly be of the greatest benefit to Victoria and myself, I venture to hope that our correspondence may not come to a close with this present letter.

Would Your Majesty permit me to postpone for some little time my reply in detail to the main point of your letter—that dealing with the Spanish question? The events now going on in Spain appear to tend towards destruction of the old basis without creating a new one.

As regards the Cracow affair,¹ which was the main subject of my last letter, I will merely say now that since its status was decided, there have been two events which remove, at least for the moment, the apprehensions that I submitted to you at the time:—Russia's (temporary?) renunciation of her plan of utterly destroying Poland, and the Ordinance (*Stiftung*) of 3rd February.²

The first of these two events removes the danger which seemed to me to threaten the foreign policy of Prussia by the continuance of an alliance with Russia with joint liability [in Poland]—I mean, to a certain extent the European danger arising from this liability. The second event—rather, I should say, act of magnanimity—proves that no foreign alliance could possess sufficient power or influence to place further restrictions on Your Majesty's noble determination respecting internal political reform in Prussia. The danger thus removed may be named the national or German danger. British opinion at any rate considers that the strongest and most menacing of all the bonds chaining Prussia to Russia and Austria—namely, the assumed agreement of those three Powers on the principle, that, apart from the body of officials, no individual in the nation shall be allowed to claim as a right participation in the control of the nation's life as a whole,—appears now genuinely to have been severed.

¹ In 1815 Cracow was renounced by the Emperor Alexander and was promoted to be a Free State. Since, however, the city developed into a centre for pan-Polish propaganda, Austria, with the consent of Prussia and Russia, annexed it on 11th November, 1846. She gave to England and France no intimation beforehand of her intended action, which was contrary to the expressed wishes of these two Governments.

² An edict convening the combined Diet.

Your Majesty will be better able than I to judge whether this release (which is greeted with rejoicing by England) may fail perhaps to be regarded in that favourable light by Russia and Austria, who are likely to become day by day less trustful and sincere in regard to Your Majesty's attitude towards the alliance, which has always been loyal and honourable. Of this however there is no doubt, that as long as the earlier intimate relationship between the "Three Powers" continues to be a reality, England, in her attitude towards Prussia, will be only too pleased to make use of her as an intermediary with the other two Northern Powers, or, to use your own expression, to possess a handle with which to grip and manipulate the mighty cauldron of that Triple Alliance.

I must go with more detail into the matter of Greece, which is mentioned in Your Majesty's second letter. I can assure Your Majesty that both it and the Portuguese matter heavily concern us. Your Majesty suffers along with both of us from the serious and unavoidable disadvantage of being at so great a distance from the spot, in consequence of which we are unable to learn of events and conditions in Greece except through the reports of our political agents. These reports, as received by us, evidently differ widely from those received by Your Majesty, and are in fact contradictory - for which we have so far been unable to account. You, as well as ourselves, do not regard Sir Edmund Lyons as a very capable diplomat, and we know very well that his despatches are written in a spirit of obstinate partisanship. Nevertheless several of the facts reported by him are so well supported by evidence, that their truth cannot be doubted, whereas the same facts appear to have been ignored by Your Majesty's diplomats. Colettis, who is the pivot round which the matter revolves, seems according to these facts to be absolutely unworthy of your royal nephew's confidence. He uses the King as a screen to protect himself from well-merited blows aimed at him, even at the risk of the screen itself crashing down upon him. Our intention in despatching our fleet was primarily to maintain on the spot a counterweight to the French, and to give countenance to the representations Sir E. Lyons had to make. These representations concern a point with which any British Ministry would be obliged to deal energetically.

For some long time Greece has failed to pay the interest on her loan which is guaranteed by us ; hence we are forced to pay it for

her. We are as certain as can be that Greece has all the time been making secret payments to the French. And, moreover, that the failure to pay is not due to lack of the means is further proved by a declaration by the Greek Finance Minister in person that the revenues of the State have shown a surplus. Colettis deliberately falsified the State accounts in order to conceal the surplus from the creditors whom he is putting off. He in the meantime appropriates the money thus abstracted for the purpose of obtaining an artificial majority by means of bribery and intimidation at the elections, and so maintaining himself in power. We demand, and perfectly fairly, restitution of at least part of the money owing to us, which has been frittered away and squandered for anti-constitutional purposes. If the only result of such pressure were the appointment of a law-abiding Ministry people here would probably be satisfied. But I can hardly imagine it possible that Sir Edmund Lyons could be so far led astray by his personal hatreds as to make the presence of the fleet an instrument for their satisfaction.

Your Majesty may rely on us watching Sir E. Lyons with anxious attention, and seizing upon any action of his not in conformity with his duties to demand his immediate recall. The charge Your Majesty brings against him is a very grave one, and is the more painful to us, since we have at the moment no means of ascertaining or proving its justification. To show you how little capable of such action Sir E. Lyons is considered here, I must mention that directly after the incidents of 15th September, Lord Aberdeen proposed the Order of the Bath for him, as a distinction which his loyal and faithful action on that occasion justly merited.

Finally Your Majesty must permit me to refer again to your grant of a Constitution, and to congratulate you the more heartily on having at last successfully concluded that heavy task, the more particularly, since, if I may say so, it appears to me that in your second letter to me and in certain phrases of your Speech from the Throne (which I read with admiration, and indeed almost imagined hearing you pronounce) you were not entirely just to this child of yours. The impression produced in England by the opening of the United *Landtag*, and by the speeches and other proceedings accompanying it, has been remarkable, and everyone is wondering how so much real parliamentary eloquence and skill, so much patriotic activity and such a height of excellence can have lain buried in the Prussian and

German peoples, and yet be ready suddenly to spring to life before the eyes of the world, armed and equipped at birth like Minerva—or like your Speech from the Throne! The complete novelty of these phenomena is showing the extent of the difference between the provincial Diets and the United Diet, about which Your Majesty expressed doubts. To my mind the difference is not less great than between eight separate members and the living man formed of them when combined. This United *Landtag* has given the Prussians, as a nation, their first opportunity since 1813 of being politically active, and therefore alive, for "Life is being active," and for a nation there is no more essential and necessary activity (barring wars of liberation) than a settled share in the management of its own political life, whether through the medium of provincial Diets or of elected deputies. Your Majesty appears to consider the summoning of the United *Landtag* as the first step towards the natural self-development of the already existing system of provincial Diets ; whereas I cannot help thinking that the first impulse to such a union, and with it the germ of a real Constitution for the country or the Empire, lay entirely outside that normal development, and in fact, absolutely in the hands of the Monarch. Moreover, as regards the application of your Majesty's favourite anti-French principle to other constitutional questions, it is still very questionable, whether, surrounded as you are by nations, some of which have been developed politically ever since the Middle Ages, whilst others have attained that development by revolutionary violence, you can expect your nation to develop as slowly and deliberately as if it was existing in a vacuum or was still in the Middle Ages. You expose yourself, it seems to me, to a two-fold danger, first the present day urge of your people to rush by a violent reaction towards lawlessness and corruption, and secondly that of stemming, owing to personal distaste, the natural development of your nation's strength to oppose that one of all foreign nations, against which yours requires to assemble all its forces.

However, I admit that all this is mere verbiage in face of Your Majesty's great achievement, for which you will not prohibit me from wishing you in the name of Germany and England most heartily and gratefully every possible success. By the grant of the Constitution, combined simultaneously with the laws on tolerance and the public administration of the law (and in addition the impending Press legislation), the internal politics and foreign relationships of

Prussia—and Germany—have acquired a basis, which appears to me far solider and more durable than the former condition for which it has been substituted.

May Your Majesty soon reap a rich reward for all that you have accomplished, in the fullest satisfaction over your achievement. At this juncture that prayer drives every other desire (at least every political one) into the background of my heart, and joins with all the feelings of gratitude and devotion, of loyal affection and respect, with which I am and ever shall be, your Majesty's true and devoted cousin, ALBERT.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 15th April 1847.—I have to-day read with alarm the King of Prussia's Speech,² which in my bad word for word translation gives a truly strange impression. Those who know and love the King recognise him and his views and feelings in every word and will be grateful to him for the frankness with which he expresses himself; but if one puts oneself in the position of a cool, critical public, one's heart sinks. What confusion of ideas, and what boldness in a king to speak extempore; and at such a moment and at such length not only to touch on topics so terrible and difficult, to dispose of them in that slap-dash way, to call God to witness, to promise, threaten, pledge his word, &c.

To the Same.³

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 17th April 1847.—The King lets himself be misled by similes which captivate his fancy, and which he carries out only so far as they suit his purpose, and which frequently by no means reflect the true state of things, but satisfy because they are clever and full of ideas. This makes close discussion with him impossible. . . . Then the King runs another risk in this, that he adopts *subjective feelings* and opinions as the motive principle of his actions, and then not only acts upon them, but also desires that, as these feelings and opinions are dear and sacred to him, they should be the same to everybody else, no matter whether they are not even affected by them in the slightest degree or not, nay, although to carry

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 407.

² In the United *Landtag* in Berlin on 11th April.

³ See Martin, vol. i, p. 408.

them into effect would probably result in injustice. To this class belong those feelings of piety towards the late King, which only the son can feel, and those favourite maxims, which have a special truth for *him*, springing as they do out of certain favourite studies and lines of thought. Herein is to be found the key to his strange address from the throne. It is a purely subjective Brandenburg, Hohenzollern, Frederick-Wilhelmish opinion. . . .

Since December affairs in Germany have improved at every turn. Russia has felt that above all things a further attempt on the nationality of Poland would not be politic, and Prussia, by her entrance into constitutional life, has been withdrawn from those alliances by which she has identified herself with the Northern powers, although the King thinks he must and can hold by them. He will soon perceive that even although *he* were disposed to do so the two other Powers would not agree to have him.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 28th April 1847.

YOUR MAJESTY, We received yesterday at the hands of your Minister the *Glaubenschild*¹ (shield of faith). Geheimer Rat Bunsen and "Benvenuto Cellini"-Hossauer explained everything to us in detail ; and I can even now hardly find words to express my admiration of that unique work of art. First of all, what sound workmanship, worthy of England no less than Germany, and what technical command of the material ! Again, what masterly work in the Italian-classic style in the composition, drawing, and especially in the graphic presentation of the individual designs ! Finally what truly German depth of thought and artistic symbolism in the conception and general arrangement ! And when I reflect that this princely gift springs not only from the hands, but also from the brain of Your Majesty, seeing that you yourself originated the first idea and the sketch, and when I think also of all the treasure of the messages contained in your recent letters to us, I am obliged to say to myself : No man has ever in a single present had showered upon him by another so incalculable a wealth of gifts, such as we—Victoria, your god-son and myself—have received from Your Majesty.

¹ The King's present to the Prince of Wales, cast by the firm of Hossauer, after drawings by Peter Cornelius. It was the fifth anniversary of his christening.



H.M. King Frederick William IV of Prussia

Your god-son cannot at present, I admit, rejoice properly over such a gift, nor can he express to his Royal god-father his feelings, as he would wish to, if he could. But I trust that his eye will learn by constantly gazing at the work, not less than his soul will by contemplation of its meaning ; and I hope that, when he is old enough to understand the difference between nations, he will feel proud that the country which produced such a work of art is one, if only the second, of his two fatherlands.

To the Same.

OSBORNE, 11th August 1847.

YOUR MAJESTY,—I approach Your Majesty to-day with a request which I think I may venture to hope will not be refused me. Three years ago, when Professor Hofmann, of Bonn, accepted an appointment as Director of the Royal College of Chemistry in London, you graciously permitted him to retain his former title and post as Professor Ordinarius at the University for three years, and at the same time promised that he should be allowed to return to Bonn before the completion of the period, supposing that the scheme of the College, which had just been founded and opened, were to fall to the ground. The excellent Professor has during the last three years been successful, by his skilful management and indefatigable energy, in raising the new Institution to a high pitch of usefulness and popularity, and there is every prospect that it will continue in the same course. Nevertheless, it is always a matter of anxiety for a German to be at the head of an institution depending entirely on private voluntary contributions, even though I am President of it ; and doubly anxious is it for a German who has only recently acquired a wife ; for now his four eyes look into the future far more doubtfully than his single pair of eyes did before. His and my request—and also that of the College—is now that Your Majesty may consent to retain for Professor Hofmann his post as Ordinarius at Bonn for a further three years.

To the Duchess of Kent.

ARDVERIKIE,¹ 27th Aug. 1847.—I have to thank you for two dear letters, and for very beautiful presents which reached me yesterday

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 424. The shooting-lodge on the shore of Loch Laggan was the property of Lord Henry Bentinck, but was leased by the Queen from the Marquis of Abercorn.

by Victoria's hand, and delighted me greatly. The glass vases are indeed extremely fine, and so also are the statuettes of the consoling and avenging angels.

Victoria has written to you with full particulars of our journey, and Charles has also described portions of it, so you will not expect me to do more than express in general terms that we have truly had immense enjoyment of nature, and that the trouble is well repaid of visiting the west coast of Scotland. I must also confess that the reporter was right when he said, "The Prince looked pleased with everything, and everybody, and with himself too." Is not that a happy state?

Ardverikie, which you will probably not trust yourself to pronounce, is very lovely and wild, and is a thorough Highland retreat. The reporters call it an "un-come-at-able place," because they are quartered on the other side of Loch Laggan, which is only to be crossed on a flying bridge, that belongs exclusively to ourselves.

The children are well and happy. Yesterday, my twenty-eighth birthday, we had a Highland gathering, at which there were all sorts of ancient games of a warlike kind. Now I conclude, in peaceful wise, calling myself, your devoted Son, ALBERT.

PART THREE

THE PRINCE'S SYMPATHIES WITH
THE MOVEMENT FOR GERMAN
UNITY

1847-1853

READERS will recollect that on quitting his German home in 1840 for England, Prince Albert swore to himself and his family to be in future "a loyal German, Coburger, and Gothaner," and to "benefit the land from which he himself had received so many benefits." This resolution, arising from his warm feeling for the country of his origin, was backed up by a circumstance in consonance with constitutional law, and one of special interest to Germans to-day : namely, that, though he had become an Englishman, Prince Albert still continued his connection with German nationality, in so far as his descendants retained their hereditary rights in the Duchy of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, and, indeed, they did in course of time come to rule over the Duchy. This fact by itself was enough to justify him, although domiciled in a foreign country, in being spiritually stirred by the destiny of Germany.

Albert fulfilled his pledge to the fullest extent ; unlike so many other German princes who have gone abroad, he did not renounce his German national sentiments on assuming another nationality ; he remained a German in the full sense of the word. It was at his suggestion that German was the language to be used in private with his Royal spouse and that it was employed in everyday conversation in his family, and the German Christmas tree was lit up in his house at Christmas. From the same German standpoint, Albert made it his political aim to forge an understanding between the two great Germanic nations, to both of which he equally belonged, which might develop in time into an Anglo-German alliance. The " perfidy " of the French in 1845 in connection with the Spanish Marriages shook the *entente cordiale* which had stood firm between England and France since 1834, and thereafter Albert looked forward to creating a great Germanic *bloc*, consisting of Germany, England, Belgium, Denmark, and Switzerland, with the idea of erecting an unsurmountable rampart against Russia and France—against " military despotism and red republicanism."

In Albert's eyes it was an essential preliminary condition to his project that Germany, still at that period broken up into a large number of states, great and small, and since 1815 joined in more than questionable union under the German Confederation, should be welded into the genuine union of a German *Reich*, acting politically as a Power ; and further that this *Reich* should receive a constitutional form of Government, since anything short of this might make any idea of a *rapprochement* with Germany unacceptable to the British. On the other hand, England, in the early forties, had deserted Protection for Free Trade, whereas Germany was aiming, with the help of the *Zollverein*, at acquiring union and strength by means of high protective duties, and at becoming an exporting nation, and the economic opposition of the two countries had become so intense that it demanded a great deal of faith to believe that they could co-operate politically.

It is essential to the comprehension of the possibilities of Albert's genius, and also of its limitations, not to lose sight of the fact that he was a pure idealist, in politics as in other matters. He was far from being a ruthless power-seeker and materialist in politics, using without scruple the fortune of the hour for his country's exclusive advantage ; his desire was to see ethical principles and maxims applied with righteousness to politics. Once the divine law of morality and logic were taken as the guide in all dealings, the result could not fail to be good ; whereas failure to observe the principles of ethics was immoral in the public, just as in the private, sense, and also unreasonable from the point of view of logic, and therefore was bound to react to the disadvantage of the administrator. Seen in this light, the question of Cracow, which raised so much dust in the period of this coming section, was nothing else than a breach of the law by Austria. Likewise, the Schleswig-Holstein question : by every legal right Schleswig and Holstein ought to remain united. The Augustenburg line held the right of succession ; therefore, the London Protocol was unjust, and Palmerston's policy should be repudiated, apart from every other consideration, whether it involved profit to the interests of Great Britain or loss.

The natural consequence of Albert's ideological position was the feeling he evinced in favour of applying constitutional forms after the English (not the French) model to the old provincial diet systems, in the case of any State that desired it ; thus a stand ought to be made against the Electorate of Hesse, which intended to set aside the Constitution it had promised. At the same time, States which were ready to adopt new constitutional forms should always do so with reference to existing institutions and in continuous organic development of them ; but no nation or people should be forced out of its

course of natural development, and nothing obnoxious should be grafted upon it. In this respect also Palmerston's aspiration to introduce into every country Liberalism and the parliamentary system was necessarily repugnant to the Prince.

With this equipment of maxims and principles, Albert went about the great task he had set himself of bringing about an Anglo-German understanding. His first objective was the work of establishing the needful preliminary conditions. He naturally gave his first consideration to the only German State that could rank as a Great Power, and which united in itself the hopes of all German patriots—Prussia.

Albert must have been pleased that Frederick William IV was a great admirer of Protestant England and of her Constitution—one that was an organic growth and not a written one, and was moreover based on a strictly aristocratic system of government ; and the King would be delighted to see England once again attached to the Continental Quadruple Alliance. Also it was favourable to Albert's scheme that the King, owing to the stress of the times in which he lived, stood in much nearer relation to the unity and liberation of Germany than had his father, although, as was not to be proved until later, the two words meant to him something very different from the constitutional and nationalist movements in Germany. In 1842 the King had taken advantage of this Anglophil sentiment, and had gone to England in person ; whilst there he had started a friendly relationship with Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, still further confirmed by their ensuing exchange of letters, and also by the English return visit to the Rhine three years later. Albert deliberately made use of the correspondence to influence the King in favour of his own political thought. His efforts were crowned later on, especially after March, 1848, when the Prince of Prussia took refuge for a time in London. The Prince then formed a close friendship with Albert, as his wife, Augusta, had done with Victoria on a former occasion, and Albert was successful in imbuing the King's brother and successor with his views on politics.

The first time that Albert was called upon to deal officially with German affairs was in 1847—in respect of the Neuenburg question [Neuchâtel]. It may be assumed that he was behind the Queen's letter to the King of Prussia,¹ and that he caused her to declare that, however greatly it would please her and her Government to see German unity on a firmer basis, the German Confederation could not be regarded for the time being as a Great Power ; her Government would prefer it to be led and represented by the King of Prussia.

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. ii, p. 163.

This attitude was the outcome of a number of discussions, both oral and in writing, conducted by Albert with Stockmar, Bunsen (the Prussian Minister in London), his brother Ernest, and Prince Charles of Leiningen, Albert's brother-in-law. All of them fought, each in his own way, with tongue and pen, for the coming unity and liberation of Germany, and the leader was the German prince near the throne of the powerful, constitutional, and united British Empire. In the first Memorandum, offered as a contribution by Albert towards the solution of the German problem, Austria, with her governmental system founded on immobility, is shown as the chief obstacle to German unity ; the work of uniting Germany is Prussia's task and she must assume the leadership ; as a first step on the road towards centralisation, permanent Commissions formed by the leading representatives of all German countries must hold session at Frankfort.

But there came a break in this clean-cut political line, for the "loyal Coburger and Gothaner" in Albert forced its way to the front, and he was overtaken by fears that the small German States might be mediatised. His Memorandum of March 1848 supports the tendency towards pan-Germanism, and considers it unessential to exclude Austria from the future *Reich*. The solution now suggested is that of a Federation, with a Reichstag, consisting of two Chambers, and a Diet of princes whose function it should be to elect the Emperor ; the hereditary Empire is cast aside. It required all the persuasion of Albert's political friends in Germany and a face-to-face talk with Stockmar to convince Albert that none but Prussia, the only genuine Great Power in Germany, could be invited to assume the leadership.

From that moment onwards the Prince adhered without further vacillation to the opinion "that the true policy for Austria as well as Prussia was that each should be constituted as a separate realm, whilst preserving mutually the most cordial friendship and a faithful alliance." He is now convinced of the necessity for excluding Austria from Germany, uniting Germany under the leadership of an hereditary Prussian monarchy, and reducing the sovereign authority of individual States. In further perspective, following the creation of a Federation within the narrower limits, he sees a possibility of founding a wider Federation, involving suppression of the narrower one, and the creation of a Federated State.

This view of politics is the foundation of all his opinions. Hence his approval of the Alliance of the Three Kings,¹ and the policy of union under Prussia, his determined opposition to the sham

¹ The Dreikönigsbundniss between Prussia, Saxony, and Hanover, 26th May, 1849.

sovereignty of the lesser kings ("Souveränitätsschwindel") who wished to prevent a Federation under Prussia; and finally, his warning to the small States that if they persisted in holding aloof from an alliance with Prussia, they would run into danger of being distributed among the six Kingdoms. In the autumn of 1850 the coincidence of the Schleswig-Holstein question and the constitutional struggle in Hesse with the movement for German unity started the great crisis which culminated in "Olmütz."¹ Albert's opinion now was that, in face of the efforts of Austria to re-assemble the obsolete Diet of the Confederation, Germany must adhere with decision to the Union and the Constitution; he failed to realise the feebleness of the Union's foundations. He was unable to reply favourably—and not merely on grounds of practical possibility—to the King's offer of an alliance in those days of trouble for Prussia; for the condition which he considered essential for an Anglo-German alliance had not been fulfilled by Germany; the time was not ripe for his great scheme.

While this German prince's fight for the welfare of his former home was denied that quick and visible success which was reserved for the great statesman and practical politician [Bismarck] who came after him, he enjoyed one triumph that admits of no denial. The Queen had not originally been any more sympathetic towards the movement for German unity than were the country and the Ministers; but Albert won his wife over to his enthusiasm for the Germanic idea and to his own plan for solving the Schleswig-Holstein question. The seed, which he then sowed in the Queen's mind, was not to bear fruit for Germany until after his death; it was due to the Queen alone that the War of 1864, the first stage on the road to German unity, was carried to a finish without foreign intervention. By her policy, in this instance, she was but giving effect to a clause in Albert's last will and testament.

¹ The Convention of Olmütz, 29th November, 1850.

1847-1853

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

ARDVERKIE, 2nd September 1847.

DEAR STOCKMAR,—You can only have two words to-day to tell you that we are well, that whenever we stir out we come home almost frozen and always wet to the skin, that the grouse are wild, and the deer very hard to get at, despite all which we are still very happy.

I am deep in German politics with Charles [Leiningen], who understands them *au fond*, and we write Memoranda with a view to the strengthening of German unity by means of a living Confederation, and keep pounding away at Austria as the main obstruction.

In the politics of Europe that Power is likely to bring us into a frightful complication with Italy. We can see the storm brewing. I am strongly of opinion that England should declare betimes that *she will not endure* that independent States should be forcibly prevented from setting about such internal reforms as they think to be for their advantage. This appears to me the sound basis for us, *vis-à-vis* of Germany, Switzerland and Italy. We are frequently inclined to plunge States into constitutional reforms for which they have no inclination. This I hold to be *quite wrong* (*vide* Spain, Portugal, Greece), although it is Lord Palmerston's hobby; but, on the other hand, I maintain that England's true position is to be the defence and support of States whose independent development is threatened from without.

To Lord John Russell, Prime Minister.²

ARDVERKIE, 5th September 1847.

MY DEAR LORD JOHN,—Many thanks for your letter of the 2nd. I am very glad that my Memorandum should coincide so entirely

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 425.

² *Ibid.*, p. 432.

with your views on the Italian question, and that you had in fact settled upon all that we thought desirable. The suddenness of your proposition about Lord Minto¹ startled us, and we thought it therefore right to let you know at once our opinions, not knowing what the objects were that you had in view.

Our policy towards Italy has hitherto been a passive or negative one, on general principles of European policy, preferring Austrian supremacy to French supremacy. We now enter upon an independent line, and one which will not admit of our remaining passive any longer. It is therefore desirable that the first step, which will give the impulse and direction to the rest for times to come should be the right one : I mean one based upon the principles of justice and moderation, and intelligible to all Europe. I think further, that *this* is the right moment and opportunity for correcting a great many misapprehensions existing about the object of English policy in general, and of setting this in its true light before the world as an explanation of the past, and a declaration for the future which will enable all governments and nations to understand what they have to expect from us.

My notion is this :—

England has, by her own energies and the fortunate circumstances in which she has been placed, acquired a start in civilisation, liberty, and prosperity over all other countries. Her popular institutions are most developed and perfected, and she has run through a development which the other countries will yet in succession have to pass through. England's mission, duty, and interest is, to put herself at the head of the diffusion of civilisation, and the attainment of liberty. Let her mode of acting, however, be that of fostering and protecting every effort made by a State to advance in that direction, but not of pressing upon any State an advance which is not the result of its own impulse. Civilisation and liberal institutions must be of organic growth, and of national development, if they are to prosper and lead to the happiness of a people. Any stage in that development missed, any jump made in it, is sure to lead to confusion, and to retard that very development which we desire. Institutions not answering the state of society for which they are intended *must work ill*, even if these

¹ With the view of strengthening the hands of Pope Pius IX in the course of reform on which he had entered, Lord Palmerston intimated a desire to send a confidential representative to Rome, and had indicated Lord Minto, then Lord Privy Seal, for the task.

institutions should be better than the state that society is in. Let England, therefore, be careful (in her zeal for progress) not to push any nation beyond its own march, and not to *impose* upon any nation what that nation does not itself *produce*; but let her declare herself the protector and friend of all States engaged in progress, and let them acquire that confidence in England, that she will, if necessary, defend them at her own risk and expense. This will give her the most powerful moral position that any country ever maintained.

In Greece, Spain, and Portugal, matters have become so complicated, and the intrigues of other countries, which we may have been obliged to meet with similar weapons, have led us so far, that they have made us deviate from the principle I have just laid down. The result proves that this deviation cannot take place with impunity, and that the return for all our zeal is hatred, and the *general belief* that we are disseminating disorder in those countries for selfish purposes. Italy and Germany are yet intact, and are of their own accord progressing in the direction of liberty and civilisation. They are threatened openly by Austria and Russia, and behind them and underhand by France.

An open avowal of the principles above enunciated, and this communicated to all the Courts of Europe, appears, therefore, the step at this moment called for on the part of England, and most in character with our position and interest. A direction should at the same time be given to our diplomatic agents, that they are to take that principle as a guide for their conduct. . . .

I have shown Lord Palmerston this letter, with the contents of which he says he agrees. He thinks that Lord Minto's instructions might properly contain the outlines of our policy.

Memorandum on German Affairs by Prince Albert.¹

[Extract]

ARDVERKIE, 11th September 1847.

. . . I will not here dwell upon the development of the forms of government into what will secure to the [German] people a larger share in the administration of their own affairs, or, in a word, into constitutional forms, but merely express my own conviction that this development is advancing with rapid strides, and will very shortly become an accomplished fact, and that, moreover, simultaneously

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 439.

with the establishment of popular activity in politics, the yearning for German unity will not merely be increased, but the means will also be provided for its attainment.

In view of this unmistakable tendency of the German public mind it becomes German Sovereigns and German Governments to consider how such a direction shall be given to it, that it may not merely not do mischief either to the country as a whole, or to the separate individual life of the different federal States, but be even productive of good to both, and so this powerful current be guided to its outfall, bearing blessings on its way. . . .

It may be assumed as a general principle in the solution of all political questions, that the organic development of what actually exists offers a better prospect for the achievement of a future really healthy condition, than the construction of a future out of some abstract and therefore arbitrary theory, however closely such theory may approximate the absolute ideal of perfection.

The *status quo*, then, in Germany shows us a multitude of different States . . . with their only point of union in the German Diet, as that was established, after the dissolution of the Empire and of the partial Rhine-Bund, as the representative of German nationality and unity. Its fundamental purpose was the individual independence and unfettered vitality of the separate States, combined with the advancement of the welfare of Germany as a nation. At present it is dead, a symbol rather than a reality, disowned as an authority by the individual States, and a byword with the German people for its inactivity and weakness. If we seek for the causes of the decline of this solitary German national institution, there are two which chiefly present themselves :—

1. The mutual jealousy of the different Governments, and the mistaken idea of the different Sovereigns that submission to the decrees of an active confederation might derogate from their sovereign authority.

2. Austria, a State composed less of German than of non-German elements, whose policy is governed by other than German interests and views, and whose system of government is so wholly based upon stagnation that it cannot hold out a hand to progress of any kind, without shattering its own foundations, continues, by virtue of its retaining as rulers the old German Imperial House, to play the most influential part in the Diet ; and on account of its

palpably Conservative bias is regarded by the smaller German States as their protection and shield. Austria impedes and stifles every living impulse of the Diet, and, in its disgust at this, Germany is tempted to regard the Diet itself as the chief obstacle to German unity. . . .

The Sovereigns, for want of a German union, have already conceded their supremacy in one of its most important points, when they put themselves, as they had to do, under the tutelage of Prussia, by becoming parties to the Zollverein. From all these considerations it should not be difficult for the German Sovereigns to arrive at the conclusion that, in every way, instead of losing influence and power by strengthening the Diet, they are much more likely to gain for themselves the position which they desire. . . .

The separation of Austria from the Diet would be a dissolution of the Bund itself, and would sensibly weaken the strength of Germany as against the rest of Europe. It therefore becomes important to devise some plan which will combine a German development within the Bund with the retention of Austria as a member of it, and the protection, at the same time, of German interests against the repressive and stifling influence of Austria. The most direct way to this end would be for the Governments to send as their representatives to the Frankfort Diet the most eminent men of their respective dominions, so as to concentrate in one place the quintessence of the intelligence and practical local knowledge of each several State. . . .

It is obvious at once that the immediate advantage of this centralised transaction of public business will be simplicity and economy, but the chief advantage of it will be, that this Congress will be *German*, even although only a certain number of the German States take part in it, and because, having their delegates present on the spot, it will be made easy for the other States to take immediate cognisance of the objects of any special Conferences, and afterwards to enter them at any time, if so authorised, and take part in their deliberations.

The mention of this Congress brings me to the greatest and most important of partial unions, i.e. the Prussian-German Zollverein. . . . Let there be erected in Frankfort a permanent Zollverein Commission, composed of the delegates of the respective States, supported, if necessary, by experts and professional men. For these deputies may be selected from the Chambers of the different States.

Let this permanent Commission deal continuously with all questions of German excise and commerce ; a step the importance and utility of which will be obvious to all. Then, if all German life be concentrated in Frankfort, all international questions between the German States will be discussed and settled there, and thus much work will be done that will be of the most salutary effect for Germany, in which Austria will take no part, and by which she will not be affected. . . .

The question next arises, How to give life to this scheme ? My own view is that the political reformation of Germany lies entirely in the hands of Prussia, and that Prussia has only to will, in order to accomplish these results. Prussia is next to Austria the most powerful State in Germany. Prussia by the legislative measures of the 3rd of February has placed herself at the head of the development of German popular institutions, Prussia has for many years stood at the head of the Zollverein, and on Prussia the political expectations of all Germany are concentrated. If Prussia were really to adopt the plan to reform here outlined, and to carry it out steadily and fearlessly, she would become the leading and directing power in Germany, which other Governments and people would have to follow, and in this way she would come to be regarded as one of the most important European powers, seeing that in the European scale she would weigh as Prussia *plus* Germany. If, on the other hand, she declines to undertake the guidance of a moderate and systematic German development, then the vital forces of the nation driven onwards by the pressure of the times will find some irregular vent for themselves, and produce convulsions of all sorts, the final issue of which no human power can foresee. ALBERT.

To Baron Josias von Bunsen, Prussian Minister in London.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 9th October 1847.

DEAR GEHEIMER RAT,—I have had a number of opportunities this summer of talking to Prince Leiningen about conditions in Germany. He knows a great deal and has, as far as I can judge, very clear and correct ideas about them. He drafted a Memorandum, pointing out the political dangers which the German princes have to fear from the present commotion in German affairs, and shows how needful it is that the princes should take note of these

dangers and be prepared to face them. I quite agree with the Prince, but think it is not enough just to realise the necessity of meeting danger. It is necessary to use the means we have, to guide those threatening movements towards a satisfactory solution. After long study I have got my ideas into shape as a coherent whole, and have put them down on paper. Prince Leiningen wrote to me recently from Munich and sent me a revised copy of his Memorandum. I enclose for you copies of this Memorandum and the Prince's letter, along with my own work, remembering all the lively discussions which the Prince and I have had with you on these subjects, and being well acquainted with your patriotic feelings and your untiring efforts to aid your King in his difficult and sacred task, by your frank sincerity and fearless counsel.

If the view expressed in the two papers be approved by the King, it is certain that his heart will provide the determination and endurance necessary to set it (or something like it) in motion, and to carry through the great political Reformation of Germany.

To the Rev. Dr. Philpott, Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 14th October 1847.

MY DEAR VICE-CHANCELLOR,—Naturally anxious to trace the course of studies and scientific inquiries pursued at Cambridge at this time, I feel desirous of being furnished with a comprehensive table, showing the scheme of tuition in the Colleges separately and in the University for the ensuing year. I mean the subjects to be taught in the different Colleges, the authors to be read there, the subjects for examination, those selected for competition and prizes, and the lectures to be given by the different professors in their different branches. Though fearing that the necessary inquiry connected with detailing and systematically arranging such a table may entail some trouble upon you, still I thought that your position as Vice-Chancellor, and the ready attention with which you have hitherto answered my many inquiries, rendered you the fittest channel through which I might obtain the information which I now seek for. Believe me always, yours truly, ALBERT.

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 116. In his capacity as Chancellor of the University, Prince Albert took pains to ascertain the views of men eminent in literature, in science, and in the practical world of politics, whose attention had been turned to the question of University Reform.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 29th Oct. 1847.—I have duly received your two letters of the 15th and 20th October, and I thank you for them with all my heart. As to the former and the views expressed in it on the subject of my German project, I quite understand that my announcement of a plan of regeneration has alarmed you, and I must acknowledge the weight of the reasons which you adduce as to my qualifications for calling such a plan into existence, only I think you have been misled by the expression “Regeneration Plan.”

The papers sent to the King consisted of a letter of mine to Bunsen, in which I sent my paper to him to look through as a German and a faithful servant of his Sovereign,—a letter from Charles to me, depicting to me the extremely precarious state in which he finds Germany at the present juncture—a long Memorandum of Charles’s, in which he looks at the position of affairs altogether from the popular as opposed to the dynastic point of view, predicts the downfall of dynasticism, and indicates the steps in advance which are desired by Liberal institutions in Germany, and the danger should Prussia not go frankly forward with its reforms. On these follows my Memorandum, in which I recognise the truth of what Charles says, but confine myself strictly to the practical question, “How is the Diet, which at present is a mere sham, to be raised into something true and efficient?” This suggests its being quickened into life by means of a Prussia emancipated from the deadening influence of Austria. My aim was, in the first place, to bring indirectly under the notice of the King of Prussia a plain unvarnished picture of the state of Germany by a German Prince, who has taken a personal part in German politics, and is in a position to understand them, and then, by suggesting a practical solution, to elicit propositions for dealing with the question in a practical way.

In accordance with this view I sent your objections to Bunsen immediately I received them, and begged him to keep back his courier until I should have an opportunity of discussing the subject with you here; but it was too late; the courier had started that morning. I enclose copy of Bunsen’s letter.

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 457.

To Baron von Bunsen, Prussian Minister in London.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 15th November 1847.

DEAR GEHEIMER RAT, --I send you the King's letter for your perusal. He describes the German plan as masterly, and agrees with every point except two, those unfortunately which deal with (1) subordination of sovereignties under the Confederation, and (2) Constitutional Governments!

Queen Victoria to the King of Prussia.¹

OSBORNE, 5th Dec. 1847.... Since your letter was written events have followed each other so rapidly that at this moment the war in Switzerland may be considered as terminated; by the capitulations of the Cantons formerly constituting the Sonderbund, *two* parties, between which a mediation of the great Powers could have taken place, have ceased to exist, and consequently mediation and the Conference resulting from it are in fact no longer necessary or possible. I had proposed London as the place of conference, but should with pleasure have waived this proposition to adopt the place which you have expressed a wish of seeing fixed for that purpose, viz. Neuchâtel, and I should have felt truly happy if by so doing I could have met your wishes, and given further protection to the principality against possible aggressions on the part of the Federal Government of Switzerland. As matters now stand, the only complication which might arise is that between Neuchâtel and the Diet. I have, in anticipation of any such event, instructed Sir Stratford Canning to exert himself to his utmost to dissuade the Diet from any plan of aggression on your territory, and he has been furnished with an able and elaborate state paper for his guidance, which Chevalier Bunsen had drawn up, discussing the legal merits of the case. Should events prove that Sir S. Canning did not arrive in time, or had not the power of averting a hostile step against Neuchâtel, you may rely upon my readiness at all times to put my good offices at your disposal. Should a conference upon Swiss affairs still become necessary, I conceive that the only plea upon which the great Powers could meet in conference would be their having guaranteed the independence and neutrality of Switzerland, and by implication the Federal Compact amongst the Cantons. This has not been the case with regard

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. ii, p. 163.

to the German Confederation, and I do not readily see in consequence how the Confederation could be admitted into this Conference, however much I confess I would like to see Germany take her place amongst the Powers of Europe, to which her strength and population fairly entitle her. I may say that my Government are equally impressed with me with the importance of German unity and strength and of this strength weighing in the balance of power of Europe ; I am sure that the English public generally share this feeling, but I must not conceal from your Majesty that much would depend upon the manner in which this power was represented. Much as the English would like to see this power represented by the enlightened councils of your Majesty, they would be animated with very different feelings in seeing it in the hands of Prince Metternich. . . . VICTORIA R.

To Dr. Phelps, Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University.¹

OSBORNE, 11th December 1847.

MY DEAR DR. PHELPS,—I have received your communication about the Chancellor's medals for this year. I shall with pleasure continue these prizes, and even meditate adding a fourth for an *historical essay* to be contended for by graduates in the year immediately succeeding their taking their degrees. In the absence of all historical lectures this stimulus to the study of history appears to me of some importance. I shall have time to consider this more fully and should be glad to receive any suggestion from you. In the meantime the decision about the subject for the English poem presses, seeing that you must announce it within five days from this time. The theme for this year I should like to see selected from our Northern mythology,² the British and Scandinavian being full of fine subjects, and being a field as yet little explored, though well deserving of attention. The death of Baldur, the deeds of Thor, the punishment of Loke, Odin's fight with the Giants, &c. &c. . . . might any one of them be appropriate.

In the examination for the Classical medals I am inclined to think that expertness in philological criticism ought to weigh much in the decision upon the candidates' proficiency ; this would en-

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 124. Dr. Phelps had succeeded Dr. Philpott as Vice-Chancellor.

² This was done. "The Death of Baldur" was the subject chosen.

courage the young men rather to go deeper into the spirit and meaning of the classic languages and authors, than to learn appointed books by rote. Believe me always, my dear Dr. Phelps, yours, &c. . . .
ALBERT.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 26th Dec. 1847.—These pleasant festivities always bring me doubly into contact in spirit with your loved ones in the Home-land, where you were ever so dear to me. I must now seek in the children an echo of what Ernest and I were in the old time, of what we felt and thought ; and their delight in the Christmas-trees is not less than ours used to be. You really should, some day, take courage to trust yourself to the unstable element of the sea, were it only to have a peep at our little folks. When we are in the Isle of Wight, where we are not surrounded by a Court and its formalities, our life is so quiet and simple, that it would not fatigue you.

To Baron von Stockmar.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 27th Feb. 1848.—Things are going badly. European war is at our doors, France is ablaze in every quarter, Louis Philippe is wandering about in disguise, so is the Queen ; Nemours and Clementine have found their way to Dover ; of Augustus, Victoire, Alexander Württemberg, and the others, all we know is, that the Duchess of Montpensier is at Tréport under another name ; Guizot is a prisoner, the Republic declared, the army ordered to the frontier, the incorporation of Belgium and the Rhenish provinces proclaimed. Here they refuse to pay the income tax, and attack the Ministry ; Victoria will be confined in a few days ; our poor, good grandmama³ is taken from this world. I am not cast down, still I have need of friends and of counsel in these heavy times. Come, as you love *me*, as you love *Victoria*, as you love *uncle Leopold*, as you love your German Fatherland.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.⁴

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 29th Feb. 1848.—Alas ! the news you sent were heavy news indeed. The dear, good grandmama ! She was an

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 465.

² *Ibid.*, p. 480.

³ Duchess Caroline of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg died on 22nd February, 1848.

⁴ See Martin, vol. i, p. 479.

angel upon earth ; and to us so good and loving. Oh ! that none of her grand-children should have closed her eyes ! Yet it was a boon to us that we were together¹ when the news came.

What dismal times are these ! I cannot fully give way to my own grief, harassed as we both are with the terrible present. You also will be in deep distress. Augustus, Clémentine, Nemours, and the Duchess of Montpensier, have come to us one by one like people shipwrecked ; Victoire, Alexander, the King, the Queen, are still tossing upon the waves, or have drifted to other shores : we know nothing of them. France is in flames ; Belgium is menaced. We have a Ministerial, money and tax crisis : and Victoria is on the point of being confined. My heart is heavy.

To Baron von Stockmar.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 11th March 1848.—We had our revolution yesterday, and it went up in smoke. In London eight hundred special constables were on duty, but the troops were kept out of the way, to prevent any possibility of a collision. The law was victorious. I hope this will make a good impression on the Continent. In Ireland things look still more serious.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 18th March 1848.

YOUR MAJESTY,—The happy event which we expected has taken place. At 8 o'clock this morning the Queen was safely delivered of a daughter.³ Both mother and child are quite well. Being confident of the friendship Your Majesty has so often shown us and of your kindly sympathy with all that concerns our family, one member of which is so happy as to possess in you a second father, I venture to commend our new-born infant to your gracious benevolence. In times like the present, when all social conditions are shifting and tottering, it is the more important to tighten the ties of home life, so that one may feel absolutely firm in this

¹ The Prince's brother, the Duke of Coburg, and his Duchess were then on a visit to the Queen and Prince.

² See Martin, vol. ii, p. 34. The Chartist movement, a mild reflection of the blaze upon the Continent, culminated in a mass meeting on Kennington Common, organised by Fergus O'Connor. A procession, carrying "The People's Charter," marched (in number about 23,000) to the Thames bridges, and the Petition was dispatched to the House of Commons in three cabs.

³ Princess Louise, later Duchess of Argyll.

possession at any rate, the most sacred of all. I beg you in Victoria's name and mine to announce the happy event to the Queen, and enlist her good wishes on our behalf. At this moment I desire for Victoria an interval of political calm abroad, and that her strength, which for some time past has had to endure so many sad experiences, shall not be put to further proof too soon.

To King Leopold I of the Belgians.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 28th March 1848.—Yesterday I received poor Prince William of Prussia, who is extraordinarily depressed by what has happened in Berlin. He fell a sacrifice to the popular rage against the troops. Germany can ill spare people like him.

Memorandum.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 28th March 1848.—Germany must change from a Confederation of States into a Federated State: this is the problem to be solved. If the solution is to prove salutary and durable, it must be made to grow out of the present state of affairs and become the starting-point for the future history of all Germany. It must be, not an academic theorem, but the practical, final presentation of a condition for which the German people have for long yearned and suffered, and which will satisfy absolutely all the demands and requirements of the “State.” We have in Germany various individual nations, States complete in themselves, dynasties, crowns,—all of which will have to be welded into one whole. It would be a sin to level down and efface the individual characters of these nations by a centralisation stamping all with the same pattern, for it is their characteristic peculiarities and oppositions that constitute the many-sided energy and freshness of German life. The Crowns and dynasties, which are bound up with the individualities of these States, must not be injured or humbled, for if so the personality and executive efficiency of individual States will be destroyed. On the contrary, States and peoples must together form a political vital whole. My idea of the solution is as follows:

The Princes of the German Confederation together with the Burgomasters of the four Free Cities shall constitute a Diet of Princes, and elect from among their midst (for life or a stated period of years—10?) a German Emperor.

The Diets of the various German States shall select from among their two Chambers a number of representatives, estimated on the basis of the number of inhabitants and the importance of each State, and send them up to a German *Reichstag*.

A Court of Justice of the *Reich*, presided over by a non-removable Chancellor, shall form a Supreme Court, picked from the law faculties of the German Universities, to decide all cases between the various individual States and between the Governments and their Diets ; also all German questions of succession and regency, divisions of estates, and cases of inheritance.

The Emperor is the representative of Germany. All business of the *Reich* is done in his name. He has the appointment to all posts together with the Chamber of Princes. He opens the *Reichstag* of the day at the head of the Chamber of Princes. He may reject motions proposed by the Chamber of Princes, and a Resolution of the *Reichstag* cannot pass into law without his sanction. He may on occasion be represented by another Prince. His Ministers are the Foreign Minister and the Presidents of a Board of Trade and a War Council. These Ministers are responsible to the *Reichstag*. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs deals with Ministers of foreign Countries, and in special cases sends Envoys to foreign courts.

The German Board of Trade, consisting of Civil Servants from the various States, controls the German customs, navigation, roads, railways, posts and communications.

The German War Council, consisting of Generals from the various armics, controls the organisation of the German Army, consisting of the troops of individual States. The head of it is the Federal Commander-in-Chief. Likewise the fortresses and fleet are under the War Council.

The Chamber of Princes consists of the German sovereigns themselves or princes of their Houses representing them. It can veto the Resolutions of the *Reichstag* and appointments to official posts made by the Emperor. Under the presidency of the Emperor it appoints the three Imperial Boards. It sanctions the proposals to be made to the *Reichstag* by the Emperor. A majority carries the vote, but the rulers of the larger States possess a proportionately greater number of votes. Any prince may vote by proxy. The Chamber of Princes, with the Emperor, selects the Commander-in-Chief in the event and for the duration of a war.

The Reichstag assembles every three years. The members of both Chambers of the various States (which compose it) sit and deliberate together, but they vote in two Courts corresponding to those Chambers. Each member will speak from his seat. In the Reichstag a majority carries the vote, so that agreement by both Courts is necessary for a decision. The number of members need not be too great. Not more than 50 in the first, not more than 150 in the second Chamber--together 200. A Reichstag *Marschall*, elected from the first Court by the whole Reichstag, shall be Speaker.

Thus we have: an Emperor representing and impersonating united Germany, and principal administrator of the executive power. His fitness is guaranteed by election by and from amongst 27 sovereign rulers, who on their side enjoy a share of the dignity with him who is chosen by and from among their number. Furthermore, to co-ordinate the executive power, a "responsible Ministry" in the persons of the Speakers of the three Imperial Chambers, and a Commander-in-Chief, whose capacity is guaranteed by his being selected for a particular object at a critical moment. Then, a Diet of Princes having a direct share in the executive power and in the representative character of the Emperor, who by this essential division of power fully guarantees undiminished continuity for the power and dignity of all German crowns. Then, a Reichstag expressing the joint will of the entire German nation, yet so constituted that each single and individual German State is fully represented by the sending of deputies chosen out of their Estates. Finally, we have a Supreme Court of the *Reich*, representing the combined judicial wisdom of Germany, and removed by its permanence from the fear of external influence.

The powers of these authorities naturally extend only to matters of general German importance (which will have to be defined more closely), but not so as to impinge upon the legal and administrative prerogatives of individual States.

To Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 30th March 1848.-- Although the excitement in Germany must be very great, and conditions in Europe seem to be getting more and more involved, yet Germany appears

to desire to secure a solid settlement. I cannot understand why you do not approve of the King of Prussia's methods.¹ He has done everything that was left to him to do, and has thereby done an immense service to Germany. She will and must be constituted anew, and if some important German prince fails to undertake the task, it will fall into the hands of clubs, societies, professors, theorists and humbugs ; and if the work is not begun soon, the masses will seize the control of it. Without an Emperor at the head it will mean a Republic involving a condition of affairs similar to America or Switzerland.

I have set myself to work on a scheme of a Constitution, which to me is a better guarantee for a satisfactory future than the Heidelberg experiment, with its Parliament copying the Constituent Assembly of 1790 in Paris. If you like it, please adopt it and give it all possible support ; the important thing is to have something all ready to put forward. I have sent my scheme to Berlin, Vienna, Dresden, Munich, etc. Do all you can to help !

P.S.—The poor Prince of Prussia is much to be pitied. He is very unjustly under a cloud, for he is whole-heartedly in favour of the new idea.

PP.S.—One more word. I have just had your dear letter of the 25th, and find that you still distrust the King of Prussia. I can assure you that I find in his character the best guarantees for the security of the other sovereigns. He has feelings of pious respect for Austria, and has made most of his political mistakes out of kindness to the rest of the German sovereigns. Our only salvation lies in his energy of action ; that is why the Radicals are so furious. The main pinch will be in preventing the princes from being divided and so weakened by minor considerations. For heaven's sake don't let yourself be caught in that trap. It will be the greatest menace to your sovereignty, which will be laid low by a Republic. Preach this right and left !

To Prince Charles of Leiningen.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 30th March 1848.—The poor Prince of Prussia has been shamefully slandered by a party which would gladly see the best of the princes cleared out of the way. He is here.

¹ Duke Ernest had said that the order removing the troops from Berlin had " delivered King and Kingdom into the tender mercies of the masses."

One could wish for no better sentiments and intentions than those which inspire him at this moment—truly patriotic. In Germany we cannot do without men of honour, such as he is, especially as he is the heir to Prussia! Do your best to enlighten those who are deluded about him. He was not in favour of a change, but he is loyal, and will stand or fall by the new, as he was ready to do by the old.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 30th March 1848.

DEAR STOCKMAR, To-day I send you a plan for the new Germany, as I picture it to myself. It is the duty of every German to contribute what he can, that something good may come out of the discussion. I do not like the Heidelberg project at all, neither do I like Mohl's. If you think well of mine, pray adopt it, and endeavour to find an opening for it. Something must be *done*, and that quickly, otherwise down will fall the house, whose foundations have already been seriously shaken.

I have sent my plan to Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, and Munich.

I have never been so sorely pressed as now; events, business, feelings, thoughts, bow me almost to the earth.

We cannot let the Prince of Prussia perish. He has made enemies, because he is dreaded; but he is noble and honourable, and wholly devoted to the new movement for Germany. He takes it all with soldierly honour, and will stand gallantly by the post which has been entrusted to him.²

To the Same.

OSBORNE, 11th April 1848.³—It is very good of you to speak so kindly of me. You cannot imagine how my fingers itch at being obliged to be away from Germany just now. I hope that even if you cannot go to Frankfort yourself, you can at least furnish Briegleb and Spessart [the Coburg Representatives] with your good advice. I am curious to hear what you will say to my project. The King of Prussia, in writing to me, called it “ideally good.”

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 56.

² The Prince of Prussia was then in London, having arrived there on the 27th of March, and taken up his residence in the house of the Prussian Ambassador, the Chevalier Bunsen. He remained in England till nearly the end of May, when he returned to Berlin.

³ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 58.

He wishes some alterations which are of no moment, but which seem to my mind to destroy the harmony of the plan. That the Emperor should be named for life is certainly better than for a term of years. But a Roman Emperor, and a King of the Germans, will not be acceptable to the Germans, however attractive it may seem historically.¹

To the Same.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 6th May 1848.— . . . We have Chartist riots every night, which result in numbers of broken heads. The organisation of these people is incredible. They have secret signals, and correspond from town to town by means of carrier pigeons. In London they are from 10,000 to 20,000 strong, which is not much out of a population of two millions ; but if they could, by means of their organisation, throw themselves in a body upon any one point, they might be successful in a *coup-de-main*. Up to this time they have been dealt with only through the police ; and if it is possible to keep them in check without military force, the troops will certainly not be allowed to come into conflict with them. The loyalty of the country on the whole is, besides, very great ; and, so far as the person of the Sovereign is concerned, can never have been greater.

To the Same.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 22nd May 1848.—All is well with us, and the Throne has never stood higher in England than at this moment.

To Prince William of Prussia.

OSBORNE, 23rd May 1848.—I send you back the suggestion for a Constitution with my best thanks. It follows almost in its entirety the Belgian one. Were I at the meeting, I should treat your marginal Minutes as they do in England, and move “ that the words stand part of the Bill.”

But how disgraceful is the revolt in Vienna. They have again thrown over the Austrian Constitution before it was even discussed,

¹ Stockmar had been urged to serve as a Representative of Coburg, but declined for reasons of health. The King of Prussia's aims, as described by him in letters to the Prince, were as follows : to replace the ancient Imperial Crown of Rome on the head of the hereditary Austrian Emperor, with an elective Emperor for Germany, who, if he was not Emperor of Austria, would need to be confirmed in his office by the latter.

² See Martin, vol. ii, p. 42.

and have again given in to the populace and students of Vienna, just as the elected Representatives of the country were on the point of debating the Bill. The street urchins' *l'état c'est moi* is too much of a good thing ! I fear it will react on Berlin. May God, who alone can protect and save, guard and watch over you !

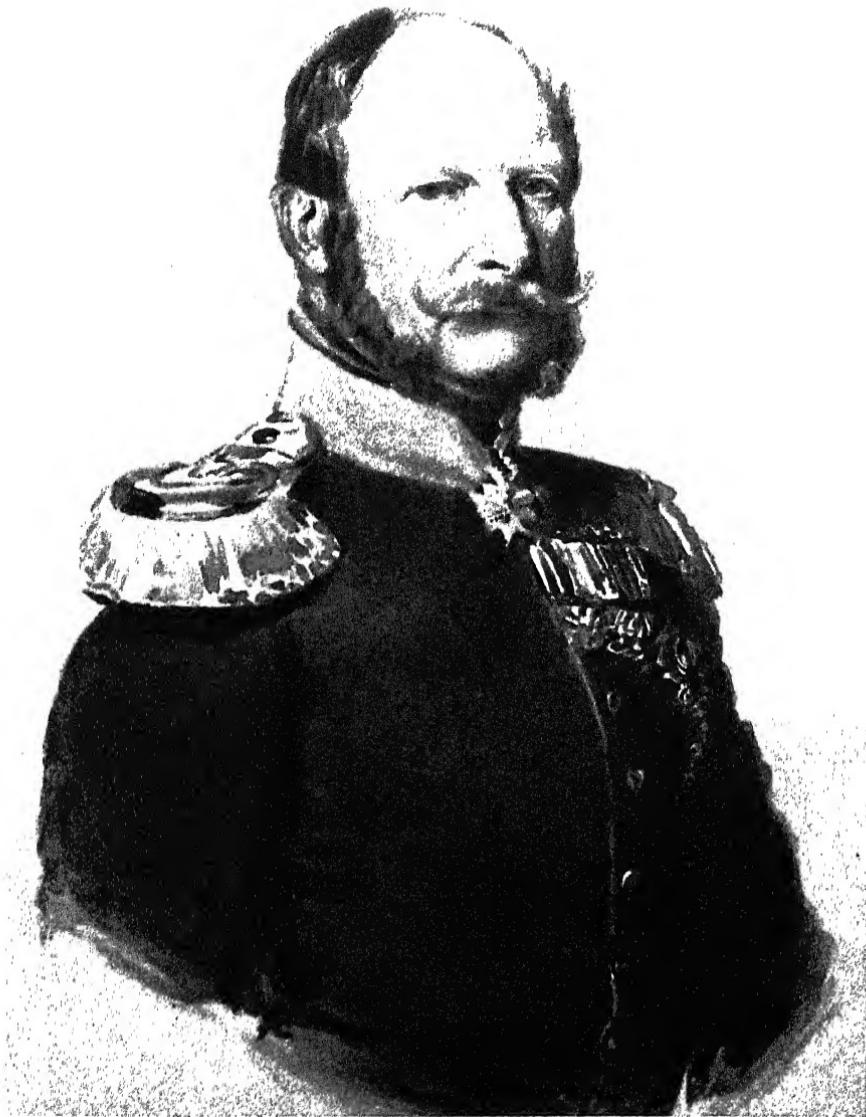
To the Same.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 4th July 1848.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I hasten to reply to your friendly letter of the 22nd, which only reached me yesterday. It all looks very gloomy in Berlin, and I can imagine how your patriotic heart bleeds over it. And yet there have been several events elsewhere lately which give reason for fresh hope. The crisis in Paris has given the death-blow to the workers' movement and to Communism, and also to the Red Republic, which was as a matter of fact the only genuine attempt. Do you suppose this could fail to react on Vienna and Berlin, and that, after having aped every former movement in Paris, they would not be prepared to ape the retreat from Communism ? I think that, now that the impression of this bloody defeat in Paris is fresh, the time has come for the Prussian Government to address a serious word to the riotous workers and put an end to their *régime*.

The appointment of the Archduke John [as Regent of the Empire, by the National Assembly at Frankfort] saves Germany from the Republic and from separatism. It now lies with the Governments to maintain a close connection with the central administration, and to strengthen it with their power and themselves also by loyal co-operation. For this purpose it appears absolutely essential for the princes at Frankfort immediately to lay the foundation of the Confederation of Princes, and present it as a *fait accompli*, for, if not done in this way, it is not likely to come into being by any Resolution of the Frankfort Assembly, whether or not the State Parliaments have already given their assent to it.

I advised therefore that the King should at once send someone who had his confidence, if possible one of his family—far preferably yourself—and that this Envoy should be confidentially accredited to the Archduke in person, and be the personal representative of the Kingdom of Prussia, and the member through whom the controller of the central administration should be made acquainted with the



H.R.H. Prince William of Prussia, 1854
Afterwards the Emperor William I
From the picture by Faija, after Winterhalter

wishes and feelings of the Prussian Crown. The King should advise that the same should be done by the rest of the German States. The right of the German princes to appoint such a Mission could not be challenged, and the National Assembly has bound its hands by accepting the Clause : "The Regent of the Empire shall, in his administrative work, place himself, as far as is possible, in personal communication with the Plenipotentiaries of the State Governments." Failing prompt action by a Council of Princes surrounding the Emperor, it will be difficult—to say nothing of the significance of this arrangement as regards morals and principles—to avoid a mass of difficulties and impediments, material and personal. In any case there is danger in delay.

England is keeping quiet and reasonable, and is relieved not to be in the same boat as France.

To Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

OSBORNE, 29th July 1848.—Charles writes again that the princes cannot be restrained at all, and advises them to clear out quickly and anyhow drive a good bargain. But that is a low view to take of such high interests ! I still believe in a Union with a Federal monarchy. Prussia's perplexities will have a good effect, but the Archduke *must* be surrounded by Delegates from the various States. Whom are you sending him ? Camphausen, I hear, goes from Prussia. Bunsen may possibly be Foreign Minister, as he has suddenly been sent for to Berlin.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

OSBORNE, 9th August 1848.

DEAR STOCKMAR,— . . . We were surprised yesterday by the nomination of Charles [Prince Leiningen] as Minister President. It is good for the cause that he has received the appointment. For a Prince to be at the head of the first Ministry gives a certain dignity to the cause, and Charles has talent for foreign affairs, and at the same time no small experience gained by his long residence here. You, too, will, no doubt, do a little prompting behind the scenes, which can have only good results. What now is to be the attitude of the separate States towards the central authority ? Is this to take

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 99.

no legitimate and official shape, or is it to consist entirely of Declarations, and counter-Declarations, and street brawls? This seems to me to be at this moment the most important thing the Regent has to settle.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.¹

BALMORAL, 11th Sept. 1848.—We have withdrawn for a short time into a complete mountain solitude, where one rarely sees a human face, where the snow already covers the mountain tops, and the wild deer come creeping round the house. I, naughty man, have also been crawling after the harmless stags, and to-day I shot two red deer—at least, I hope so, for they are not yet found, but I have brought home a fine roebuck with me.

This place belonged to poor Sir Robert Gordon, Lord Aberdeen's brother, and the little castle was built by him. It is of granite, with numerous small turrets, and whitewashed [Scotice^l, harled], and is situated upon a rising ground, surrounded by birchwood, and close to the River Dee. The air is glorious and clear, but icy cold.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

OSSORNE, 13th December 1848.

YOUR MAJESTY,—My conviction of the high importance of the present moment for Germany's future destiny urges me to submit to Your Majesty a short Memorandum of my views of what the German princes ought to do. I think that your fine determination in rejecting all petitions and demands that you should on your own authority or in obedience to Resolutions of the National Assembly at Frankfort raise yourself over the heads of the other Ruling Princes as their Emperor, makes it all the more necessary to offer the Ruling Princes themselves an opportunity of agreeing on the choice of their leader, and I believe that this can only be done in their Assembly at Frankfort.

Your Majesty has been through a bad time, but God's blessing has rested upon you. Accept my heartfelt prayer that you may get rid of their Constituent Assembly, and that a Constitution ² may be granted, which so completely confirms the March concessions for

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 109.

² The Prussian National Assembly was dissolved on 5th December, and the Constitution was promulgated, along with a decree ordering Elections for the First and Second Chambers.

Prussia, that no honest democrat could fail to be pleased with it, except he might regret not having been the author of it himself. Pray permit Victoria and myself to congratulate Your Majesty and the dear Queen on the recent celebration of your silver wedding, and on the popular manifestations of the old loyalty and affection on that occasion.

With a prayer for God's protection and blessings on your head, I remain in loyal friendship to Your Majesty, your devoted cousin and servant, ALBERT.

Memorandum.

[*Enclosure.*]

The deliberations of the Delegates on the new German Imperial Constitution are nearing their conclusion. Once the Constitution is fully worked out, it will, in order to be effective, require ratification by each one of the German States. At the same time it will be necessary to set a term to the provisional central administration, which was appointed merely for the duration of the deliberations. There is only one means for settling these two points quickly (certainly the most difficult in all the work on the Constitution), and it is as follows : the German princes should assemble forthwith in person at Frankfort, constitute themselves as a body and act accordingly. They will naturally keep themselves in continuous communication with the Assembly of the *Reich* and with the Regent of the Empire, for the purpose of direct consultation and for voting the necessary Resolutions. When the time comes for a Resolution on the establishment of a definite central power, both as regards the method and the man, the Regent of the Empire will be required to surrender into its hands the dignity which was his provisionally. It needs no further explanation to show that this sovereign participation by the German princes in the work on the Constitution is absolutely essential not only for initiating the work, but also for maintaining the inherent dignity and moral prestige of the princes.

To Sir George Grey, Home Secretary.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 22nd December 1848.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,—I have to thank you for the communication of the enclosed reports from Ireland, which seem to

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 137.

show that that unhappy country may be considered at this moment in an *average* state of misery and criminality. The unequal pressure of the poor-rates, and apparent injustice and depreciating effect in the levying them equally upon the landlord who gives employment and the one who gives none, make me think that it will be absolutely necessary for the Government to hold out a premium for employment. I know, and fully feel, how difficult this would be to carry out, but I should still hope that some scheme might be hit upon which would answer.

Could a landlord, for instance, who takes a certain number of persons away from the poor-law relief by offering them work, *which work is manifestly undertaken for the purpose of relief, and not such as the estate would necessarily call for*, be allowed a commensurate diminution in his payment of rates? Some such *bonus* might induce people to lay out capital for beneficial purposes, while the maintenance by the poor law of the labourers out of employment is wholly unproductive, and few people are able to do both give the employment and pay the rates especially if they can justly apprehend that other people would use their patriotism to charge them with burdens from which they hope thereby to escape. Perhaps the Government grants for drainage, &c., &c., might afford peculiar facilities for some such condition. Ever yours truly, ALBERT.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 27th Dec. 1848. — I come to you to-day with new-year salutations, and wish you much health and happiness at the beginning of the new as well as at the close of the old year. One is heartily glad to say good-bye to it, and deeply grateful ought we to be that we have managed to come out of it with a whole skin. Still I fear that mankind has not grown much wiser or better, and I see symptoms in the German Sovereigns of an inclination to repeat all the old faults, which have been within an ace of costing them their heads. *Rien oublier et rien apprendre* is the motto of many. Ernest, on the contrary, commands my praise for the extraordinary activity and good will which he shows.

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 156.

To Prince William of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 6th January 1849.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—Bunsen is going to Berlin. I cannot let him start without giving him a letter to you to wish you happiness for the New Year. It will be a serious and momentous year, and may God bless and help it, so that the many terribly difficult problems which have to be solved may be solved happily and healthily ; for up to now there has been so much agitation and confusion, and though a stop has been put to the machinations of evil-doers, the construction of the future State is still uncompleted, in fact hardly begun. The Governments are called upon to be active, united and firm of purpose, to renounce petty and personal considerations, and to strive solely for the common good of the Fatherland. Since the miserable eclipse of the princes and all authority, the excesses of the revolutionary party, and the resulting disgust of the better class of patriot have caused the transference of some power back to the princes and Governments, and made it possible for them to undertake the shaping of the future. Woe unto them if they miss this opportunity, and by their behaviour justify all the unjust accusations which were levelled against them during the recent troubles, by making it seem as if the welfare of Germany meant nothing to them. I consider that the Prussian Revolution is not crushed, but merely adjourned till February, when the new Prussian Constitution will have to be dealt with. If by then a strong central authority for Germany has not been established, the outlook will be bad, for the Prussian Constitution will make government difficult, and as it was the gift of the sovereign himself, it cannot very well be withdrawn by him. Württemberg, Baden, the Hesses, Nassau and Thuringia are still in great confusion and disorganisation, only curable by the rise of a strong central authority. Failing this, and if there are fresh outbreaks in Berlin, the only outcome will be its utter collapse. I sing you the song of Cassandra to get you to help in preaching energy, unity and patriotism to all whom you are in a position to influence. Each moment is truly as valuable as gold.

The withdrawal of Austria from the new State, and the assembling of the Princes at Frankfort to elect a supreme head and confirm the new Constitution (when I trust they will try to settle its fundamental principles) are two points which should not be neglected for a minute.

I fear I am boring you with a long political dissertation. You must forgive me and remember I was spoilt by all the discussions we were in the habit of having together last summer.

To the Same.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 22nd February 1849.

MY DEAR COUSIN, I owe you most grateful thanks for your long and kind letter, and now wish to tell you how pleased I am that you look with such courage into the future, and are so thoroughly in sympathy with the principles set forth in the Circular Note of 23rd January.¹ Unfortunately I gather from a letter from the King that this is not the case with him, and I have taken the liberty of explaining in a long letter the reasons why I believe that Prussia must not give up German unity, even though Austria, and for the moment Bavaria, will have nothing to say to it. I have put all my wisdom about the relations of Prussia and Austria with Germany into that letter, which accompanies this one to Berlin, and I should be glad if you also would read it.

Germany probably has new and terrible storms in front of her before she can satisfy her main need, that of German unity. If the satisfaction of this need, which in spite of all obstacles will in the end obtain justice, is to be handed over to popular decision and a Republic, Prussia must not hesitate to get in beforehand by creating a smaller Confederation to which the States, one by one, may adhere by treaty, as they realise the necessity or are obliged to do so.

I am very much interested by your remarks on German military organisation, which Bunsen kindly handed to me. I should like to have a long talk to you about them. I have no time to-day. I have only a few words to add to express my sorrow at the loss of the excellent Valdernar,² which I feel, and Victoria also.

Keep your friendship for me, and feel assured of my unchanging loyalty. . . .

¹ The Circular Note of 23rd January to the German Governments, wrung from the King by his advisers, stressed the importance of an understanding with the National Assembly, and of Gagern's (President of the Frankfort Parliament) programme of the small Bund within the larger one, which would logically lead on to a Prussian hegemony of the Reich. The Note aroused much displeasure in Austria.

² Prince Valdernar (see p. 100) died on 17th February.

To Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 10th April 1849.—I have your letter from Hamburg, in which you tell me you joined your brigade, and two days later (i.e. yesterday) the news of a great victory¹ under most remarkable circumstances. You are a lucky fellow and are like a sportsman who goes out after snipe and gets a stag with 14 points. It could not have turned out better, and the loss of her ships may make Denmark more ready to listen to reason and to agree to a peace of which both she and Germany stand in need.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 10th April 1849.—The children grow more than well. Bertie will be given over in a few weeks into the hands of a tutor whom we have found. He is a Mr. Birch, a young, good-looking, amiable man, who was a tutor at Eton, and who not only himself took the highest honours at Cambridge, but whose pupils have also won especial distinction.

It is an important step, and God's blessing be upon it, for upon the good education of princes, and especially of those who are destined to govern, the welfare of the world in these days very greatly depends.

To Queen Victoria.

BROCKLESBY,³ 17th April 1849.

DEAR WIFE,—Your faithful husband reports, according to your wish,

1. That he is still alive ;
2. That he has discovered the North Pole of Lincoln Cathedral, but without finding there either Capt. Ross or Sir John Franklin ;
3. That he arrived at Brocklesby and received the Address ;
4. That he took a ride and returned covered with snow and with icicles at the end of his nose ;
5. That the messenger is waiting for his letter, which will reach you at Windsor in the morning.

¹ A fight at Eckernförde against the Danes on 5th April, at which Duke Ernest II commanded a Brigade.

² See Martin, vol. ii, p. 175.

³ The Earl of Yarborough's seat, where the Prince was staying to lay the first stone of the Great Grimsby Docks. (See his *Principal Speeches and Addresses*, Murray, 1862, p. 93.)

6. Last but not least (as they say in after-dinner speeches), that he loves his wife, and remains, Your FAITHFUL HUSBAND.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 14th May 1849.—You in Germany are entering upon a new epoch, again stained with blood. Poor country! How many men have perished since March, 1848; how many millions have suffered! And I should like to find one single person who is better off than he was before.

To Lord John Russell, Prime Minister.¹

20th June 1849.

MY DEAR LORD JOHN, — Your proposal with respect to the mode of taking the Queen's pleasure about the drafts is perfectly agreeable to the Queen. She would only require that she would not be pressed for an answer within a few minutes, as is now done sometimes.

Lord Palmerston could always manage so that there are twelve or twenty-four hours left for reference to you, and consideration, and there are few instances in which business would suffer from so short a delay. As Lord Palmerston knows when the mails go, he has only to write in time for them, and he must recollect that the 28,000 despatches in the year come to you and to the Queen as well as to himself.

Should the Queen in future have to make any remark, she will make it to you, if that will suit you. Ever yours truly, ALBERT.

To Prince William of Prussia.

OSSORNE, 24th July 1849.

DEAR COUSIN, . . . We have followed your war operations with the greatest interest, and wish you continuous success in your difficult task.² The condition in which you found Baden must have made you think that the social injury has bitten deep into the State and the nation, and that it is high time a definite settlement was made of the German constitutional question, and a strong and homogene-

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. ii, p. 263.

² In Baden, where there was a rising, the Prince of Prussia, commanding two Army Corps (a fight at Waghäusel on 21st June, and others), had restored order.

ous central authority set up, capable of defending law and liberty. This can and will be found only in Prussia. I am delighted at the progress made by the Alliance of the Three Kings, and hope to God that the King [of Prussia] will stand by it and not alter one tittle of the promise he has now solemnly made to Germany. As soon as most of the States have given their adherence, the new Assembly ought to be summoned, in order, on the one hand, to restore the nation's confidence in its own future and in the honesty of Governments, without which no advance is imaginable, and, on the other hand, to give it an opportunity of speaking out plainly in favour of the Prussian proposal and identifying itself with it. If this is not done, it is possible that the intrigues of the Courts of Austria, Bavaria, Würtemberg, Hanover, and perhaps even Saxony may succeed in casting poor Germany, after nearly two years of terrible suffering, back into the chaos of uncertainty, lawlessness and feebleness, which is bound to result in a fresh and destructive revolution. For there can be no doubt whatever that Austria (wrong-headed though this will be) will use every means in her power to prevent a union of Germany under Prussia, and that the Kings of Bavaria, Würtemberg and Hanover will not give way an inch in their claims to sovereignty unless forced to by their own people or by external circumstances. They will go as far as robbing their smaller neighbours, but they won't become German. I have recently had strong evidence of the King of Würtemberg's intentions in this respect, and of the King of Hanover's dishonesty towards Prussia. It will be much better for Prussia to unite with the small States, and by bringing the new Constitution at once into life, preserve for Germany the forms of unity, to which time will force the other States to give their adherence, than to wait for the Kingdoms to join in. This latter hope will be a failure and all will be lost once again. It is the more essential for Prussia to make good her word by her actions and maintain her good name, since there is no denying that she has little reason to be pleased with the armistice recently concluded with Denmark, for the peace preliminaries have brought neither honour to her nor satisfaction to the hopes of Germany.

Forgive me for the frankness of my expressions and for pressing my ideas on you again. But you know how I love the Fatherland and how I trust in your friendship, and must make allowances for my feelings.

To Sir Robert Peel.¹

BALMORAL, 21st August 1849.

MY DEAR SIR ROBERT,—I must write you a line since our return from Ireland. I am sure you will be pleased at the splendid reception which the people of Ireland gave us ; and, although you always anticipated that they would show great loyalty, the intensity of the feelings they evinced would have surpassed even your expectations. I hear from every quarter that the Irish themselves are pleased with themselves, and take a pride in the mode in which they expressed their attachment to the throne of the Queen personally, which is the best effect one can desire. All parties seemed united, and party feuds were dropped. We saw the clergy of all the different Churches, and were as *godless* in that respect as your Colleges, which are to be opened in October. We visited the one at Belfast, and I had a good deal of conversation about them with Lord Clarendon. His selection of Professors seems excellent. I went through the plan of studies with Sir George Grey, which I think requires some improvement here and there.

The great question to decide now is, whether the Colleges or the United University are to confer the degrees and guide the Examinations. I have declared myself strongly for the latter plan, and believe that this will coincide with your views. If left to themselves, the Colleges would soon degenerate in the South into Roman Catholic Seminaries, and in the North into a Presbyterian School ; but the competition of the three for University honours and scholarships will create a stimulus, which will keep up every one of them to the highest state of efficiency, and will enable the Government quietly to secure the execution of the original intention in the foundation of the Colleges against local influences.

I hope you like your Highland home as much as we do ours, and derive as much benefit and recreation from it as we do. Believe me, yours truly, ALBERT.

To Baron von Stockmar.²

BALMORAL, 26th August 1849.

DEAR STOCKMAR,—I write to you on this my thirtieth birthday—an important period in a man's life ; and as I do so, I remember with

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 217.

² *Ibid.*, p. 214.

gratitude all the good lessons and practical maxims which I have received from you, and all the valuable aids which you have given me towards the establishment of my political position. I can say that I am content with everything, and would now only desire more energy and perseverance to work as much good as circumstances allow. Sins of *omission* in abundance I can recognise in the course of my life ; and yet, again, they often seem to me only natural, when I consider the fetters which prudence imposes on us to prevent our falling into sins of *commission*. Victoria is happy and cheerful, and enjoys a love and homage in the country, of which in this summer's tour we have received the most striking proofs. The children are well, and grow apace.

The Highlands are glorious, and the sport plentiful.

Germany has now entered, you will say, upon a new phase, since the subjection of Hungary has been completed.¹ May God keep His hand on Frederick William IV, and prevent any sudden deviation from the line which has up to this time been pursued in the Constitutional Question !

*To the Same.*²

BALMORAL, 10th September 1849.

DEAR STOCKMAR,—What principally occupies me just now is a plan for the establishment of a free University for Ireland in connection with the “godless colleges,” in which I am supported by Peel and Lord Clarendon, and which may be regarded as accomplished ; and another plan for a World Industrial Exhibition. Agents report from the manufacturing districts that the manufacturers hail the project with delight, and will co-operate heartily ; and the East India Company promises to contribute a complete collection of all the products of India. The affair will be further advanced in October. To win over the Continent will be no easy matter.

I have been unlucky in my sport. I have been unable to get near a single stag since the first evening, when I brought down three in two hours. Still I do not lose patience ; and I console myself with the vigour I gain from exercise in the mountains and the fine air.

¹ The defeat of the Hungarians at Temesvar on 10th August immediately brought the Hungarian struggle for independence to an end.

² See Martin, vol. ii, p. 216.

To Colonel Sir Charles Phipps.¹

BALMORAL, 20th September 1849.

MY DEAR PHIPPS, . . . Now to the working classes (so called). The improvement of their condition can be aimed at practically only in four ways :

1. Education of the children with industrial training.
2. Improvement of their dwellings.
3. Grant of allotments with the cottages.
4. Savings' Banks and Benefit Societies (if possible, managed by themselves), particularly on sound economical principles. I shall never cease to promote these four objects wherever and whenever I can, and you need not be afraid of urging the subject with me. I am just considering what can be done here, where the cottage accommodation borders on the Irish.² The price allowed for a cottage is £15 !! Osborne has not hitherto been *pressed on*, because of the labour-market, which is another important consideration ; Mr. Cubitt judging correctly that after the excitement which the great work must produce on the labour-market, we should keep the other works in hand, in order to spin out the employment and let it down by degrees, whilst building cottages, besides the great works, would have increased the temporary demand and stopped it suddenly afterwards.

Allotments are getting pretty general.

I see in the *Builder* that the bricklayers, masons, and carpenters, &c. &c. of London have established a Society on the plan of the Servants' Benevolent Association and find general support. When I come to England, more about all this. Ever yours truly, A.

To Prince William of Prussia.

OSBORNE, 26th November 1849.

DEAR COUSIN,— I still owe you an answer and my best thanks for your dear letter, which Dr. Meyer brought me. I admit the delay, but I hope you will not think my friendship is cooler, or that my interest in these important matters, which just now are exciting all Germany, is waning. I hail with joy the manly, honourable, patriotic

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 228.

² At Balmoral, as well as on the other Royal estates, the cottages are models fitness, convenience, and comfort.

and consistent manner in which Prussia has asserted herself so far in these affairs, complicated in themselves and confused by every kind of passion. I especially admired the Note, which was Prussia's reply to the pettifogging Notes from Hanover and Saxony. It appeared in the papers yesterday.¹ Prussia will have to redeem her pledge to Germany, which she gave after she, by the break-up of the Frankfort Constitution, had made impossible the union which had been agreed to by all the German Governments—in the Frankfort manner—and had resumed personal responsibility for fulfilment of the pledge, by moderate and fairer methods. I myself am not surprised at the difficulties and the present opposition to the accomplishment of that great work, for I foresaw that the fearful democratic excitements of last year would be followed by popular exhaustion and reaction among the Governments, and that it would necessarily postpone realisation of the union, which could not take place without moral efforts and political sacrifices. I therefore regretted that so much time was being lost in Berlin in summoning the *Reichstag*. This is the only action which the nation could regard as a real guarantee that Prussia is in earnest in the matter. For proclamations, manifestoes, and diplomatic Notes do not and cannot inspire much confidence after Germany's sad experiences ever since 1815, and now again in consequence of the Saxon-Hanoverian obstruction. It may be a good thing that the main difficulties have arisen now before the *Reichstag* meets, so that they may be thoroughly out of the way.

I heard from Baron Stockmar that there is suspicion in Prussia that my uncle of Belgium is encouraging the anti-Prussian opposition, and think that for his sake and yours I should touch on that point. Uncle Leopold can only have given cause for such resentment, owing to many rulers and diplomats having addressed their complaints to him in the hope that he may mediate for them. His main concern is the danger that the present troubles might produce a war between Austria and Prussia, and that all Europe might be drawn into it, a danger against which, in his loyalty to a policy of peace and reconciliation, he is giving warnings on all sides. At Stockmar's suggestion I enclose a copy of a letter I wrote to him some time ago,

¹ Hanover and Saxony, who, after the overthrow of the Revolutions in Hungary and Italy, took up an attitude of reserve towards Austria, obstructed the summoning of the *Reichstag*, and on 21st October resigned from the Union.

which I beg you to treat as highly confidential. This applies equally to a copy of my last letter to Charles Leiningen, which I also enclose. I was horrified at Leiningen's Memorandum,¹ for the fact of his relationship and friendship with us might easily make the public imagine that we agree with his views. When I read the *Deutsche Zeitung* it seemed to me that this misconception had taken some hold.

Everything is going very well here. My proposal for an Industrial Exhibition for the whole inhabited globe has been enthusiastically taken up here. I am promised large contributions for it, and I hope to see German industry well represented.

To the Duke of Wellington.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 6th April 1850.

MY DEAR DUKE.—The Queen and I have thoroughly considered your proposal to join the offices of Adjutant-General and Quarter-master-General into one of a Chief of the Staff, with a view to facilitate the future assumption of the command of the army by myself.

The question whether it will be advisable that I should take the command of the army or not has been most anxiously weighed by me, and I have come to the conclusion that my decision ought entirely and solely to be guided by the consideration whether it would interfere with or assist my position of consort to the Sovereign, and the performance of the duties which this position imposes upon me.

This position is a most peculiar and delicate one. Whilst a female sovereign has a great many disadvantages in comparison with a king, yet, if she is married, and her husband understands and does his duty, her position, on the other hand, has many compensating advantages, and, in the long run, will be found even to be stronger than that of a male sovereign. But this requires that the husband should entirely sink his *own individual* existence in that of his wife—

¹ Prince Leiningen's Memorandum of 12th November spoke with much resignation about the later developments in the movement for German unity; he admitted his own illusions, and that he had no further confidence in Reichstag, and nothing but a policy of power (*Machtpolitik*) could accomplish anything. If Prussia and Austria would unite, they might prepare a scheme for a Congress consisting of representatives of Governments and State Parliaments, and thus preserve the true constitutional liberties.

² See Martin, vol. ii, p. 259. The Prince had, during the stay at Windsor, to consider and dispose of a proposition by the Duke of Wellington, which came upon him by surprise, that he should succeed the Duke in the office of Commander-in-Chief.

that he should aim at no power by himself or for himself—should shun all contention—assume no separate responsibility before the public, but make his position entirely a part of hers—fill up every gap which, as a woman, she would naturally leave in the exercise of her regal functions—continually and anxiously watch every part of the public business, in order to be able to advise and assist her at any moment in any of the multifarious and difficult questions or duties brought before her, sometimes international, sometimes political, or social, or personal. As the natural head of her family, superintendent of her household, manager of her private affairs, sole *confidential* adviser in politics, and only assistant in her communications with the officers of the Government, he is, besides, the husband of the Queen, the tutor of the royal children, the private secretary of the sovereign, and her permanent minister.

How far would it be consistent with this position to undertake the management and administration of a most important branch of the public service, and the individual responsibility attaching to it—becoming an executive officer of the Crown, receiving the Queen's commands through her Secretaries of State, &c. &c.? I feel sure that, having undertaken the responsibility, I should not be satisfied to leave the business and real work in the hands of another (the Chief of the Staff), but should feel it my duty to look to them myself. But whilst I should in this manner perform duties which, I am sure, every able General Officer, who has gained experience in the field, would be able to perform better than myself, who have not had the advantage of such experience, most important duties connected with the welfare of the Sovereign would be left unperformed, which nobody *could* perform but myself. I am afraid, therefore, that I must discard the tempting idea of being placed in command of the British army.

On the other hand, nobody can feel more strongly than I do, that the theory of the British Constitution being, that the Sovereign commands the army, and this having been hitherto the practice also, it is a source of great weakness to the Crown, . . . that the Sovereign, being a lady, cannot exercise that command as she ought, and give the Commander-in-Chief that support which he requires under ordinary circumstances, and that consequently it becomes my additional and special duty to supply the wants in this respect, and to bestow particular care and attention on the affairs of the army.

As long, however, as your Grace holds the Command-in-Chief, this support is in no way required. On the contrary, the Crown may be said to receive support from the unexampled strength of your position in public opinion ; and for me to attempt any personal control on your direction of the affairs of the army would be ridiculously presumptuous. I have in consequence carefully abstained from assisting the Queen in this respect ; but as you were so good as to say that it would give you pleasure to establish more direct and intimate communication with me, and that you thought this communication had better be established now with you as Commander-in-Chief, than attempted at a future time (which I hope may be long distant) by an order given by the Queen to your successor, I most gratefully accept this offer, and wish most especially to express to you my sense of the advantage which will result to me, and through me to the Queen, by my thus receiving instruction and tuition in military affairs from the greatest master of them. I have only one scruple, viz. that I might add to your trouble, and already sufficiently onerous labours, and would therefore repeat my request that you would merely put into a box and send me such papers as you thought it might be advantageous for me to peruse : I promise not to detain them long. . . . Ever yours truly, ALBERT.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 1st May 1850. —I congratulate you to-day on the birth of a seventh grandchild,² and expect in return good wishes from you on the birth of a third son. This morning about a quarter-past eight, after a rather restless night (being Walpurgis night, *that* was quite appropriate), while the witches were careering on the Blocksberg (under Ernest Augustus's mild sceptre), a little boy glided into the light of day, and has been received by the sisters with *jubilates*. “Now we are just as many as the days in the week !” was the cry, and then a bit of a struggle arose as to who was to be Sunday. Out of well-bred courtesy the honour was conceded to the newcomer.

Victoria is well, so is the child, and I am driven distracted with letters, inquiries, answers, &c. This compels me to break off my chat with you before it is well begun.

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 264.

² Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught.

I take up my hat and am making for the door, when you call to me—"But you have not said good-bye to Mama." "So I must!" Now I must really be off.

To Prince William of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 1st May 1850.

DEAR COUSIN,—I was just about to write to you to tell you that Victoria and the third little son continue to be both well, when I received through Lord Cowley¹ your friendly letter written on the day of Victoria's safe delivery, being also the 82nd birthday² of the good old Duke of Wellington, in whose honour the little boy is to be named Arthur. In memory of *Belle Alliance*³ of 1815, and trusting in your friendship, we hope you will not refuse our invitation to stand god-father to our son along with the aged hero. You have been present at the christenings of two of our children, but have not so far assumed the sacred office of god-father.

At this unrestful juncture we hardly dare hope to have the joy of seeing you here this time, but if you could come nevertheless, it would naturally give us great pleasure. Duchess Ida of Weimar is to be god-mother in memory of poor Queen Adelaide, who would certainly have been delighted at this addition to our family. The child's full names will be Arthur William Patrick Albert—Patrick for the Irish to show our gratitude for their friendly reception of us last year. Victoria's love has always insisted on my name to finish up with.⁴

I have no regret that our little one's birthday coincided with the death day of the Frankfort Interim [Constitution], and can only wish that the Erfurt Constitution could be settled and the Princes sworn on the same date. The urgent necessity of this settlement is clearly shown, as you say in your letter, by the assembling, on the sole responsibility of Austria, of the old full Diet at Frankfort, which, if it goes on in the old way, will once again let go everything which you and Germany have laboriously won and saved during these last two sad years, and whose birth cost Germany 33 years of suffering. It is perfectly clear that the sole object of Austria and the Kings in

¹ Minister at Berne; afterwards with the German Confederation; and Ambassador in Paris.

² Note: it was really his 81st birthday.

³ The German name for the Waterloo campaign.

⁴ Later on the Queen ordained that all descendants of her House should be given as the last Christian name, Albert for the males, and Victoria for the females.

summoning the Diet is to let these achievements go for nothing, and it is high time for you to get on with your own side of the matter.

I cannot see that you have been injured by the Gotha party at Erfurt. On the contrary, the princes who are inclined to fall away have purposely left two back-doors open for themselves, so that in any case, if the acceptance *en bloc* takes place or not, they can slip out of the Confederation. Now of these two doors the Gotha party seem to me to have blocked the only really dangerous one. For if some of the princes think of retiring, Prussian diplomacy will scarcely be able to restrain them, except by relying on the pressure of public opinion, supported by the consideration of law and honour. So that I am sorry that the Prussian Ministry have, for reasons, as you say, of keeping open this diplomatic road, wounded the confidence and keenness of the Erfurt majority by a series of guarded and mysterious utterances, and reduced it to confusion. Nothing could have better encouraged the inclination to desert the Confederation than the plan of Stahl's party for a Confederation consisting only of Prussia and the smallest States, leaving out Baden and the two Hesses, and the belief it gave rise to, that it represented the wishes of the Prussian Government. As with most of the ideas started by Stahl's party, this one originally sprang from the Austrians, who have been setting the stage for it for some time past.

After all the expressed and implied threats with which Vienna has stopped you from acting for the past two years, the Austrians will not and cannot honestly take sides against you, before the narrower Confederation has come to a settlement within its widest possible limits. In the case of the more extended Confederation, I consider that you should not try to prevent Austria from entering it as a united Monarchy.

It pleases me as well as you that the Erfurt Parliament has proved as Conservative as it is patriotic. But I had not counted on a still more pronounced Conservatism, on a par with that of the Prussian Chambers, especially as that Conservatism was to be ascribed to consideration for Germany, and Berlin has proved so unexpectedly reasonable, mainly in order not to do injury to the Erfurt cause.

P.S. 7th May.—I have just had a kind letter from the King, reporting a direct threat from Austria. That won't scare us! Only don't appeal to the Great Powers. That would mean setting a wolf to mind the flock.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

OSBORNE, 25th May 1850.

YOUR MAJESTY,—The post has just brought us the terrible news of an attempt on Your Majesty's life,¹ a vain one, God be thanked, and that Your Majesty was only slightly wounded. I thank heaven that your dear life has been a second time preserved against insanity and crime and kept safe for your family, your friends and the Fatherland. May heaven send peace and strength to the poor Queen, who must have been deeply shaken by the occurrence. May she gain courage in the thought that the arm of just Providence is stronger and surer than the hand of human madness.

My brother Ernest's letters from Berlin are full of gratitude and emotion for the gracious confidence with which Your Majesty distinguished him during the Congress of Princes.² Would that the temper of the princes assembled in Berlin had been fully worthy, as he was, of the confidence of Your Majesty in allowing them a free hand! It seems, however, that German patriotism will have to acquire merit by snatching victory all over again against the forces of blindness and indecision.

We have been three days now at our Osborne retreat, having left London on the very day of the mad attempt on Your Majesty's life. I hope to God that the next news of the consequences of that event will be completely reassuring.

To Baron von Stockmar.³

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 28th June 1850.

DEAR STOCKMAR,—I have only a minute to spare, and avail myself of it to tell you that Victoria, thank God, is well, although her forehead is much bruised, and her nerves are still somewhat shaken by the shameful occurrence of yesterday.⁴ The perpetrator

¹ An insane artilleryman, Max Josef Sefeloge, shot at the King in the Potsdamer Railway Station, and wounded him slightly in the arm.

² From 8th May to 16th in Berlin; debates on the Constitution of the Union.

³ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 285.

⁴ Public indignation was once more excited by a cowardly outrage upon the Queen, committed, not, as on former occasions, by a person of mean condition, but by a man of good family, called Robert Pate, who had held a commission in the army for five years. While Her Majesty was leaving Cambridge House, where she had called to make inquiries for the Duke of Cambridge who was seriously ill, this person started forward and struck a blow with a cane at Her

is a dandy, whom you must often have seen in the Park, where he had made himself conspicuous. He maintains the closest silence as to his motives, but is manifestly deranged. All this does not help to make one cheerful.

In the House the debate on Greece has already lasted four nights. Palmerston spoke for five hours without a moment's pause. His speech is a masterpiece. The state of affairs, however, will not be improved by it ; and we may have a resignation of the Ministry to-morrow. Peel, Graham, Gladstone, Disraeli, Molesworth, Cobden, all go against the Ministry, and speak in strong terms. The Ministry has identified itself entirely with Palmerston.

The Exhibition is now attacked furiously by *The Times*, and the House of Commons is going to drive us out of the Park. There is immense excitement on the subject. If we are driven out of the Park, the work is ruined. Never was anything so foolish.¹

To the Same.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 3rd July 1850.

DEAR STOCKMAR.— You will mourn with us deeply, for you know the extent of our loss, and valued our friend as we did.³ Peel closed his eyes last night about eleven ! ! You will have heard that he fell with, or rather from, his horse, opposite our garden wall last Saturday and broke his collar-bone and shoulder-blade. He suffered greatly, and was worn out with pain, fever, and a gouty constitution. Only a few hours before his accident he was seated with us in the Commission, advising as to the difficult position into which we have been thrown in regard to the Exhibition by the refusal to allow us the use of the Park.

The debate on Palmerston had lasted the previous night till five in the morning, and Peel had made an admirable speech. Now he is cold. . . . We are in deep grief ; add to which, I cannot conceal from you that we are on the point of having to abandon the Exhibition altogether. We have announced our intention to do so, if on

Majesty's face. Its force was fortunately broken by the bonnet, but it inflicted a severe bruise on the forehead.

Pate was subsequently tried, on 11th July, and sentenced to seven years' transportation, the jury having declined to recognise the plea of insanity, which, as usual, was set up by Pate's counsel. No motive for the attack was ever assigned.

¹ The Exhibition building was erected between Rotten Row and the barracks.
² See Martin, vol. ii, p. 289. ³ Sir Robert Peel.

the day the vast building ought to be begun the site is taken from us. Peel was to have taken charge of the business in the Lower House. It is to come to the vote to-morrow, and the public is inflamed by the newspapers to madness.

Our friend, in moments like this, is sorely missed. If you can come, pray do so, for we have need of you.

To Prince William of Prussia.

OSBORNE, 20th August 1850.

DEAR COUSIN,—I have waited till to-day to thank you for your friendly letter of 11th July. I put off answering in the hope of being able to combine with it my good wishes for the achievement of a definite settlement in German affairs. But your provisional position is continuing such an unexpectedly long time, that I dare not hesitate any further. I quite understand how internal and external obstacles are preventing you from arriving at a definite decision, and even more so from carrying it out. But I see clearly also that such continued hesitation and wavering is more and more undermining the faith of the nation in the Union, and letting slip the one anchor the ship of Germany could depend on to withstand the reactionary tide of a new movement, which is waiting for its opportunity. In support of this view I will merely quote the following passage out of a letter, which I chanced to see, from a not unimportant former Conservative Statesman in South-west Germany.

“ It is hardly possible now that Germany will escape a great and long lasting disaster. The mistakes made on all sides and the failure of the Union have inspired in the masses such deep mistrust, nay such poisonous hatred, against everything and everybody, that they have nothing to believe in or depend on except a red Republic, the very thing which our all-wise politicians imagine they have destroyed. Possibly an appearance of calm may be maintained for a time by armed force ; but at the first opportunity this thin veneer will be broken down. No one who moves about among the people can be under the slightest doubt about this. Then the movement will be led by none but the most insane demagogues. This is what Austria’s foul ambition (which nevertheless can never achieve its aim of being sole arbiter in Germany), Prussia’s indecisions and cowardice, the short-sighted selfishness of the small kings, and our [the Parliament of 1848] mistakes at Frankfort, have brought us to.”

If only Austria and the princes would realise that the Revolution of 1848 is by no means finished! But the princes *ont la mémoire courte*. May it not be reserved for some new disaster to remind our princes of 1848, which they would so gladly forget! Nevertheless I keep on hoping that the King's and your solid German sense will succeed in definitely concluding the Union, and along with it in restoring the communion -- almost lost for the moment -- between democracy and personal government. The latest news from Berlin sound on the whole favourable, especially in respect of the influence you and the King have exercised successfully against your Ministry with its narrower Prussian outlook, thank God! and if only you remain firm and stand for the Constitution agreed upon at Erfurt, reason, truth and justice will in the end win a peaceful victory over falsehood and vanity. The Erfurt Constitution is at any rate something to which princes and people have definitely mutually bound themselves, and that is an intact possession for the whole nation. If it remains so, it will, whatever further discord arises, always be a firm basis for a peaceful agreement.

The poor Schleswig-Holsteiners must be bearing a great deal for their isolation; and yet it is a good thing that their justified resistance is not spoiled by appearing as the result of Prussian ambition. It will not be so very easy to settle the succession question by means of European protocols, and if the Augustenburgs are unwilling to give up their legal rights, policy will in the end force them to renounce their desires.

Here we have luckily got rid of our Parliament, which lately became quite unruly. The Exhibition in Hyde Park had a hard fight in both Houses. The matter this time was mainly in the hands of the Attorney General. His official duty was to sue the Crown for damage to the Park, but he managed to avoid doing this. The new Lord Chancellor¹ supported him strongly against Lord Brougham. So at last the building is being started.

If the weather is so polite as to keep up, we mean to start on a cruise to-morrow morning in our Yacht to Ostend, spending a day with Uncle Leopold, whom we have not seen for nearly three years. On the 27th we set out *en route* for Scotland, open the Viaduct at Berwick, and stay two days in Edinburgh, where I lay the foundation-stone of the Scottish Royal Academy. Then we bury ourselves

¹ Lord Truro, formerly Sir Thomas Wilde.

for a few weeks at Balmoral among the hills and red deer. So now you have our plan of life for the near future.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

OSBORNE, 25th Aug. 1850.—. . . I received while in town your letter about Gervinus ; at the prorogation of Parliament I saw Gervinus and had a long conversation with him. I agree entirely with all you say about the Protocol policy, but it is impossible to make any impression here upon that subject. The *idée fixe* here is, that Germany's only object in separating Holstein with Schleswig from Denmark is to incorporate them with herself, and then to draw them from the English into the Prussian commercial system. Denmark will then become a State too small to maintain a separate independence, and so the division of European territory and the balance of power will be disturbed.

I grant that this is a tenable view, and that Germany (especially Prussia) has given cause for it ; but assuredly this affords no ground for doing violence to law, to honour, to equity, and to morality, in order to defeat an eventuality which has been brought about not deliberately, but by the nature of things. Schleswig is entitled to insist on union with Holstein ; Holstein belongs to Germany, and the Augustenborgs are the heirs. How is it possible to get over these things ?

Germany appears to me to be going utterly to the dogs under the miserable policy of its rulers, and to be becoming a still readier toy for the next revolution. Are there no longer any men of heart and head, who might avert the disaster ? It is altogether too sad. . . .

To Prince William of Prussia.

BALMORAL, 7th September 1850.

DEAR COUSIN,—I write to you to-day from our mountain retreat to ask you an impertinent question : Is it true that they intend in Berlin to recall Bunsen from London ? Indications have come to me from various quarters which almost make me conclude that it is so. Though I well know that diplomatic changes of this sort are things with which a third party ought not to interfere, still I am not afraid of being misunderstood or considered presumptuous by you,

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 314.

if I express my conviction to you that though the King might discover a diplomat with a stronger will and more reserve, he will hardly find one as faithful, or as devoted to him body and soul, or one of such sound culture, or one so greatly respected and esteemed. Bunsen possesses a certain distinction and influence in England, which any other Prussian Minister would find difficulty in acquiring so quickly, and yet he is a German through and through. You will forgive me for praising qualities which you know as well as I, and have had the same opportunities of judging ; yet I looked on it as a duty to call your attention to a step which I should regard as very disadvantageous to your interests.

I have nothing new to tell you about ourselves. After our short trip to Ostend, where we had the pleasure of seeing Prince Frederick, we stayed for two days with Lord Carlisle at Castle Howard. Then to Edinburgh for a few public functions, including re-occupation of the ancient Holyroodhouse as a Royal residence ; and now we are safe in our haven of rest and retirement. I am sure you will feel the death of poor old King Louis Philippe.

To Baron von Stockmar.

OSBORNE, 17th Oct. 1850. - The misfortune¹ which I feared, and of which I expressed my apprehension when writing to you from Balmoral, has happened, and our poor Uncle now stands, for the second time in his life, alone and desolate in the world. The accounts of the last moments of our excellent Aunt are extremely touching, and prove how her noble, self-denying, self-sacrificing nature, which felt only for others, remained the same to her last breath. It would be useless to speak to you of the magnitude of the loss, for you are better able to estimate it in its consequences than I am.

The resignation of the poor old Queen [Amélie] was admirable ; and most inspiriting are the attachment and regard to which Belgium gives expression.

Victoria is greatly distressed. Her Aunt was her only confidante and friend. Sex, age, culture, feeling, rank—in all these they were so much on a par, that a relation of unconstrained friendship naturally

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 329. Scarcely had the Court returned from Scotland to Osborne, when the news was received of the death of the Queen of the Belgians, daughter of King Louis Philippe.

grew up between them ; and it was a friendship of which Victoria might with justice be proud.

I hope this misfortune will not have unnerved you ; but that it will rouse you to help, to uphold, and to cherish what is still left and is of value. Our Uncle will want you near him ; we want your presence, your counsel, your friendship in a thousand things, which are of moment not only for us, but for the whole family, for England, and through her for the whole world.

To Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 10th November 1850.

DEAR ERNEST,—You will have learned from my last letter that there is absolutely no difference of opinion between us. You say rightly : “ It is the struggle between despotism and constitutional liberty.” May Prussia realise this and confess it before the whole world. If it is a struggle of Prussia, the Prussia that seized Pomerania from the Swedes, Silesia from Austria, and the best part of their country from the poor Saxons, concluded a separate peace with the French Republic, partitioned Poland, and took Hanover as compensation ; if it is a Prussian struggle for aggrandisement, I say, and for more power and prestige, then all Europe will be against her.

The cleverest thing for her opponents to do is to treat the question in this way ; Prussia’s folly consists in her having in the negotiations separated herself from the national, representative, constitutional German standpoint. If Prussia is prepared to carry on with the struggle, from which she can now hardly draw back, she must summon her Chambers, appeal to the Diets of other German countries, protect that of Hesse, and declare openly that it is a matter of maintaining the constitutional principle. Then power will come to her, and public opinion will silence Germany’s enemies in England and France. I shall not be anxious about its success. In a policy dictated by governmental considerations, even with ten armies to back it up, Germany is bound to get the worst of it, as has been continuously the case from 1848 until now.

In this critical hour I do not like to address the ruling power of Prussia, for the responsibility is too great for advice to be offered from afar. But you might communicate the views I express to the Prince, who has once again acted as a man of honour in this difficult crisis.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 1st December 1850.

YOUR MAJESTY,—Your Majesty's gracious letter was handed to me by Lieutenant-General von Radowitz,¹ and Victoria and I have lost no time in giving the loyal servant so warmly recommended by Your Majesty a suitable welcome at Windsor. Permit me to thank you for the acquaintance of that gifted and distinguished man and the proof of confidence you show me in allowing him to discuss every question with me—even the most secret topics, and the motives governing events in Germany of recent years up to the present involved state of affairs. I believe that I have acted according to Your Majesty's wishes in making full use of this permission, and I have found occasion to admire the clarity and exactness of the General's explanations, and to rejoice in the loyal devotion to his Royal master which appears in all his utterances. Moreover the impartiality and entire absence of bitterness of his references to his political opponents have given me an equally favourable impression of his heart and mind. I shall regard it as a duty to further in every possible way all the military and industrial objects of his Mission.

My goodwill is naturally less free with regard to the General's most confidential political proposals. An Anglo-Prussian alliance is a matter of such immense import that none but the constitutional responsible advisers of the two Crowns can properly handle it, and I should be overstepping the limits of my own political position and responsibility, if I tried to influence the judgment of Prussia over what can or cannot be done about such a treaty, by an expression of my own personal opinions.

At the same time I have considered that I may incidentally and confidentially acquaint the Ministers here of its nature and possibilities. And since Your Majesty, under the impulse of your kindness and friendship towards myself, has honoured me by asking my advice to some extent at this juncture, I think I should at least

¹ Radowitz, Frederick William IV's most intimate confidant and Prussian Foreign Minister since 29th September, had been forced to retire on 2nd November. The result was that Prussia, left in the lurch by Russia, was humiliated by Austria at Olmütz (29th September). In his extremity, the King, having mobilised on 6th November, on the 9th entrusted Radowitz with a secret mission to negotiate an alliance with England in the event of war, "under conditions to be dictated by England." The ostensible commission was to examine the improvements in the British artillery and the new wide-spanned railway bridges; he was to give information without reserve on the latest developments in Prussian politics.

give a sketch of the way in which a proposal of this sort, in as far as I know conditions here, would be received and judged in England.

The British public pay little attention to Continental affairs, and know very little about them. The Press, which could enlighten them, is unfortunately often factious and naturally always partisan, and has therefore always tended to obscure German problems. This has been an easy task owing to the repugnance the British necessarily feel towards the general confusion of ideas in Germany, the democratic excesses and republican risings, the absolutist military dictatorships and reactionary movements, the breaches of word and faith by certain sovereigns, &c. &c. And however differently parties here may judge those facts, they all agree absolutely in desiring that England's interests and welfare shall not be dragged into that whirlpool. This desire only strengthens the general determination against any European war and against taking any part in one. This feeling is nourished by the daily pressing reminders of what England suffered owing to her having taken part in earlier Continental wars, in the shape of the daily increasing demand for payments on a vast National Debt. In face of this national feeling no Minister could dare pledge England's name to a measure involving a likelihood of participation in a fresh Continental war—without consent of Parliament. Such consent would never be granted, even if it were made clear to Parliament that great interests were at stake.

My personal knowledge tells me that this would in fact be what would happen here, but proof of this can be provided by Your Majesty and Prussia alone. England hates a Prussian war against Denmark, waged, it would seem, for the purpose of annexing Schleswig. She knows nothing about military roads, and is astounded that a whole nation should be called to the colours to fight for such an object. But she would fully understand what is meant by—keeping one's princely word with one's nation, even at the risk of one's own existence ; further—protecting a nation, whose obvious political and constitutional rights are being attacked, against the caprices of its ruler and his allies, and finally—stemming with determination the onrush of unbridled reaction, and forbidding the old despoticisms of Russia and Austria and Jesuitism to destroy national self-government by diplomatic intrigues and desperate threats of war, and so leave no course open but the prospect of a fresh revolution. And if, Your Majesty, you are to satisfy the British

public that it may appreciate the efforts of Prussia and offer sympathetic assistance, it is the more essential that Germany shall be fully apprised at this critical moment of Prussia's real intentions.

Former letters of mine have informed Your Majesty of my ideas on this subject. Recent events, however, have confirmed me in my opinion that Prussia (the weakest of the five Great Powers) can play, as a purely military Power, a subordinate part only in face of Austria—and in Europe, in face of the four Great Powers, no part at all. She would simply be a dependent of Russia and Austria and an instrument of their policy. Whereas a Prussia prepared to come forward as the genuine pattern of constitutional monarchy on the Continent and with unself-seeking patriotism to protect the constitutional union and foster the development of the States of Germany, will possess a moral force sufficient by itself to repel any attack—a force which will meet with England's sympathy and support, and command the respect of every foreign country; it will be the surest guarantee to Europe of universal peace. May Your Majesty allow me to hope for your success in averting a war at this critical juncture of affairs, and to hope also that Prussia will not forget that the only chance of a lasting peace lies in adopting and holding to the attitude I have described above.¹

Victoria sends best wishes and greetings, and I lay myself at the feet of the Queen, and remain with unchanging and true devotion, Your Majesty's loyal cousin, ALBERT.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 10th Dec. 1850.—We are all well. The children grow apace, and become stronger and handsomer, we elders older and plainer, and daily wiser, which is due to the many agreeable experiences which we are daily making. We have not seen Windsor the last four days, the fog being so dense that a man standing before his own door fails to recognise it. Nevertheless, by the help of a blaze of gas, we managed yesterday to inspect the Smithfield Cattle

¹ The report made by Radowitz to the King on 3rd December as the result of his talks in London was as follows: If the question of Germany were to end in a war between Prussia and Austria, a victory by Prussia was desired by the British Cabinet. But public opinion would enforce upon it strict neutrality. If Russia took part in the war directly or indirectly, England was prepared to intervene actively in Prussia's favour; but she was not prepared to engage herself to this in advance. Prussia, in the meantime, had taken the journey to Olmütz.

² See Martin, vol. ii, p. 340.

Show, and I am proud at having won a silver medal there for my fat pigs. For a cow, I have only had honourable mention, and my sheep have received no notice at all.

To Prince William of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 29th December 1850.

DEAR COUSIN,—You must not put it down to any coolness towards yourself or to my loving the Fatherland less than I have been so long in answering your last dear friendly letter, and that I have sent you no word on the constant changes in German affairs. The cause of my silence is this very friendship and my love for the Fatherland. In writing to you I could not have ignored the question of Germany, and I could not have presumed to offer an opinion on Prussia's policy, for it seemed involved in obscurity, and its attempts at a solution appeared to me full of contradictions. And I did not know sufficiently what part you, the King, the Ministers, parties, &c. &c. were playing in it; so I could hardly dare make any suggestion on what should be done, when I reflected on the heavy responsibility of doing so at a moment when it was a matter of war or peace, and when the existence of the Prussian Monarchy, and the fate of Germany—perhaps of Europe—hung in the balance. But now that the history of the regeneration of Germany appears to have reached a new stage, I consider I may judge without fear, as an historian, this latest catastrophe.

The history of Prussian policy from March, 1848, to December, 1850, is one continuous history of broken pledges and moral defeats. Prussia it was who on the 14th, i.e. *before* the March Revolution, declared that she was prepared to undertake the rejuvenation of Germany ; and the King himself it was who, after that Revolution, pledged his royal word for a united Germany and for the preservation of the rights of the German Confederation in Schleswig-Holstein. But the Prussian Government made no movement to achieve this unity, which had been the object of the efforts at Frankfort, and finally the King wrecked the work of the Frankfort Parliament by refusing the Imperial Crown and repudiating the Frankfort Constitution. But since he declared that his only reason for doing so was because the action at Frankfort was the arbitrary action of a Constituent Assembly which had not consulted the individual Governments, his word and the honour of Prussia were still pledged to

establishment of the Union by way of a free agreement between sovereign Governments. And how has Prussia now fulfilled this second solemn promise ?

After a momentary approach to it by the conclusion of the Alliance of the Three Kings, she thenceforth worked for the completion of the hoped-for Union with obvious lukewarmness, and by her slack, ambiguous and dishonest conduct gave her two principal allies the opportunity they were waiting for, to get out of it again, or (as in the case of Bavaria and Württemberg) to avoid entering into it. Then, instead of summoning Parliament along with the remaining States and so forcing the renegades to return, she merely persisted in trying to gain time, and then when Parliament did at last come together, there was demanded of it not acceptance of, but a reconstruction of the Constitution which had been offered by the Confederation. Then, when Parliament had thoroughly gone into the question, instead of the work being finished up, Parliament was prorogued, and a Congress of Princes was summoned to Berlin. There, in order to keep the Elector of Hesse in the Union, its now completed Constitution was declared out of hand to be unworkable, and the organisation of the Union was brought into force merely as a provisional arrangement ! At the same time it was found necessary, as the result of a dishonourable pretence war in Schleswig, to conclude a pretence peace with Denmark, which victimised the Holsteiners but failed to conciliate the Cabinets of Europe.

Meanwhile the opponents of Prussia and the development of Germany on their side were not idle. Having first promulgated their Munich project, they summoned conferences at Frankfort, and, though but a few States assembled there under the leadership of Austria, they took the definite step of proclaiming themselves to be the old Diet of the Confederation. Not satisfied with that, they formed at Bregenz a defensive, and possibly offensive, alliance against Prussia, securing the concurrence of Russia, and perhaps also a promise of military aid. And yet it was Russia who induced all the other States of Europe in the London Protocol to declare for the integrity of the Danish Monarchy, and therefore against Prussia, whose honour would not allow her to agree with a Protocol of that sort.

All this brought Prussia to the pass of finding all the large States of Germany and all the Great Powers of Europe united against her ; and yet her task was so great and sacred, that if she had persevered

and shown confidence in the German people, and thereby inspired their confidence in return, she could have saved her position. But Prussia stuck to the merely negative principle that she would neither recognise the old Confederation with all its faults and shortcomings, nor allow it to be forced upon Germany ; whereas the hopes of Germany were fixed on this as the Confederation had been one of Prussia's constitutional undertakings sealed by the King's promise. Then the opponents were so impudent as to send, in the name of the Diet of the Confederation, a punitive force to punish the Hessians for their loyal devotion to their Constitution and the German cause, and to encourage the Elector in his desertion of the Union—an act which roused against them every constitutional and national feeling of the German people.

Prussia failed to grasp the situation, dropped every principle and idea through which she had become strong, and took her stand upon grounds of purely military convenience—military roads, &c. &c., which could not even be fully justified by the old military treaties, and to show the falsity of which was an easy task for an opponent. The futility of such a position showed itself at its worst at Warsaw, where it forced Count Brandenburg without his knowledge or consent to make concessions, which called forth a cry of horror in Prussia and Germany as soon as they became known. Once again were the Prussian and German peoples destined to be deceived in aspirations which had been encouraged by the Prussian Government. The mobilisation of the *Landwehr* produced a momentary enthusiasm, which will be ever remarkable in the history of Germany ; it inspired horror of the Austrian League and aroused throughout Europe a wave of enthusiasm for Prussia, such as that country had not enjoyed for a long period.

The Olmütz agreement, however, extinguished the last flicker of that light. So now we see Prussia prostrate in most unexpected humiliation before Germany and Europe. The *Landwehr* recalled home after having accomplished nothing, Baden given up, Hamburg evacuated, Hesse, and Cassel even, handed over to the army of the Confederation, the punitive stipulations of the Confederation in Schleswig-Holstein agreed to, the Union gone to the winds. The Diet of the Confederation is *de facto* recognised, and in order to make any expression of the general dissatisfaction impossible, the Chambers have been prorogued (perhaps actually condemned to dissolu-

tion) and the axe has been laid to the sole surviving foundation on which the peaceful development of Prussia and Germany might have been erected for the happiness and welfare of both.

Does Berlin really mean to ignore the frightful dangers to which this series of moral defeats and deceptions (the latter especially) has exposed the peace of Prussia and Germany, and the continuance of the monarchical principle in Germany? Do they think that the nation has lost all feeling, all moral life? I say that their last vestiges of Conservatism may be shattered by disturbances such as are going on in Hesse and threaten to go on in Schleswig-Holstein, and poisoned by the germ of a fresh Revolution.

It is a terrific blow to the Crown, that in the public eye of Europe and Germany the main guilt of the last crisis and all the ignominy of Prussia falls upon the poor King, and that the public connects the root of the evil with his person—the evil which appears to be the source of the perpetual instability of Prussian policy and of the present defeat: namely a deep-seated lack of conviction, making wanton play with the sacred interests of the nation and the sacred duties attaching to him as King, and hurling stone by stone into the abyss, with fine speeches and dreams about the *droit divin des rois*, all the human and moral principles of that divine right.

My only comfort rests on this judgment, or forecast, of public opinion, and it is my hope that Prussia and Germany will centre their confidence and enthusiasm on you. I honour the reserve you have shown up till now, and charge you with all the warmth of my friendship: Keep yourself free from present-day politics, do not let yourself be compromised, reserve yourself for better times, when you can^{*} become the sheet-anchor of the ship now at the mercy of the storms.

I hope for nothing from Dresden. In Berlin the permission to confer at free meetings on all German subjects is looked upon as a great advantage gained by Manteuffel; but everything that could possibly be said at Dresden is already known, and if they wished to arrive at an agreement, they could do it anywhere and at any time. But if they agree upon some solution which fails to satisfy the German people, or at least the finer and thinking portion of it, the work cannot be a lasting one, and if they try to make it permanent by returning to Russian despotism as their form of State, it will make a Republic inevitable.

Whatever comes to pass, I am firmly convinced that Austria will produce no solution, nor can she help in any work of regeneration,

which would suit Germany's interests and hers at the same time ; whereas Prussia's and Germany's interests are identical and must share the same destiny.

I have poured out a regular flood of considerations, as is bound to happen when one has had to dam the stream for so long, and I must ask your pardon. Still, let me wish you and the dear Princess and your children all possible happiness for the New Year.

We are in the midst of a religious crisis here, which the Pope has brought upon us. It is an evil of long standing, and will have to be set right by the Protestant body.¹

The Exhibition is well forward, and its originator still hopes most earnestly it may be possible for you, the Princess and your son, to be present at the opening. The building was started on November 1st, and will be nearly ready in a few days. It is a real work of art.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 14th April 1851.

YOUR MAJESTY,—I have just received your letter of the 8th, and hasten to answer it at once, although it is but a short time before the Prince and Princess of Prussia are expected here.

The predisposing causes which in the opinion of Your Majesty and your Ministry, might create a very great future danger to the Royal Family,² seem to me to be of two kinds : those in which the

¹ On 24th September the Pope had published a Brief "under the seal of the Fisherman," by which, in lieu of the Vicars Apostolic, who had exercised spiritual jurisdiction over the Roman Catholics in England since the Reformation, he "decreed the re-establishment in the kingdom of England of a hierarchy of Bishops deriving their titles from their own sees." This Brief was couched in language which could not fail to provoke the slumbering Protestant feeling of the country. Based on the assumption "that every day the obstacles were falling off which stood in the way of the extension of the Catholic religion," it seemed to imply that the spiritual supremacy which England had long repudiated might now be asserted with impunity.

² Ernest Augustus of Hanover had written in his habitual nonsensical style to Frederick William IV on 1st April :

"I hear that the Ministers as well as Prince Albert are beginning to jibber with anxiety over this rubbishy Exhibition in London. I beg you, if you have time, to get ready to you the speech of one of the most prominent and cleverest statesmen that we have, Lord Lyndhurst, a former Lord Chancellor, who gave a complete *exposé* in Parliament last Thursday of the infamies, plots and *menées* of the excommunicated of all lands, who are now in London. It is really a masterpiece, and not merely as a speech, but in the clearness with which he explained to the Lords and Ministers how things are in London at the moment. I am not easily given to panicking, but I confess to you that I would not like anyone belonging to me exposed to the imminent perils of these times. Letters from London tell me that the Ministers will not allow the Queen and the great originator of this folly, Prince Albert, to be in London while the Exhibition is on, and I wonder at William's wishing to go there with his son."

Continent is concerned, and those to be sought here in England. As regards the first I shall not venture to express an opinion, since I am without the information Your Majesty may have, nor have I had confided to me the motives of those who have supplied this information to Your Majesty. As regards England, I can only assure Your Majesty that here we fear neither risings nor murderous attacks, and that, although many political refugees from every country live and perhaps conspire here, they behave peaceably, living in great poverty. They have realised from their own observation and experience that the British people have nothing in common with their feelings, and that London is perhaps the worst *terrain* for their schemes. (A few days ago Struve, being convinced of this, left for America.) I think it doubtful whether the rush of the curious and sight-seeing public of all nations during the Exhibition will be better suited to their criminal intentions ; but I do think that the conspirators will on the contrary feel themselves in an obvious minority even among their own countrymen. As regards the millions of British workers whom we expect in London during this period, we are assured that any disturbance of the peace would be bitterly resented by them as an attack on their festival, which they themselves christen "the working man's holiday." In order to enjoy it they have for months past laid by the savings which they can spare with difficulty. The rumour that the Court has been forced to make up its mind to desert London during the Exhibition is one of those many inventions concocted by the enemies of our artistic and cultural venture and of all progress in civilisation, to frighten the public. From the very start they have shown remarkable persistence and ingenuity.

Mathematicians have calculated that the Crystal Palace will blow down in the first strong gale ; engineers—that the galleries would crash in and destroy the visitors ; political economists have prophesied a scarcity of food in London owing to the vast concourse of people ; doctors—that owing to so many races coming in contact with each other, the Black Death of the Middle Ages would make its appearance, as it did after the Crusades ; moralists—that England would be infected by all the scourges of the civilised and uncivilised world ; theologians—that this second Tower of Babel would draw upon it the vengeance of an offended God.

I can give no guarantee against all these perils, nor am I in a position to assume responsibility for the possibly menaced lives of

your Royal relatives. But I can promise that the protection from which Victoria and I benefit will be extended to their persons—for I presume we also are on the list of victims. Nevertheless we could never make up our minds to advise Your Majesty as to any scruples regarding the Prince's visit to England. However greatly we should regret missing the great pleasure of this visit just now, we should entirely appreciate any grounds of tender anxiety on your part, in case you felt obliged to decide not to permit the Prince's visit just at this moment, and we should take comfort in the hope of having our loss made up to us another time. But it is probable that any sudden postponement of the visit, and the reasons given for it, would create a very serious sensation among the public.¹

To Prince William of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 18th June 1851.

DEAR COUSIN,—Now that you must be back from your short visit to Warsaw, I no longer hesitate to thank you for your letter of the 4th. I can imagine that the ceremony of unveiling Rauch's magnificent monument to Frederick the Great [in the Unter den Linden in Berlin] of which you write, must have been a fine and moving spectacle, and it was very good of you not to have let it put the opening of our Exhibition out of your mind.

The crowds at the Exhibition are bigger each day. Yesterday the attendance was 67,820, the day before 62,000, and yet the crowds were managed without difficulty. On the financial side we naturally stand very well. Russia has sent her treasures, and is now very well represented. India also has sent a fresh consignment of treasures. The judges will have finished their labours in a few days, and everyone is agog to hear their awards. There are crowds of Germans in London ; French also and other foreigners. We expect our Uncle Leopold here to-day. Ernest, Alexandrina and Ernest Württemberg left on the 12th. The day following we had our *bal costume* of the Charles II period, which went off really very brilliantly and transported us quite into his times. Yesterday I presided at the Jubilee Meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, at which were assembled all the religious world of every shade of opinion. I, like the other speakers, was unable to avoid mention-

¹ The Exhibition was opened on 1st May without incident. Prince William, Princess Augusta, and Prince Frederick William, the future Emperor Frederick were present at it.

ing certain ticklish Church matters. To-night I dine with the old Duke of Wellington for the Waterloo Dinner. Now you have all the news of how we live !

To-day I shall say nothing about politics. Manteuffel is a Prime Minister on the Russian model ; the King summons the provincial Diets, and people will think his action is hardly in accordance with the Constitution. The Austrians fire on the poor Hamburgers ; the Diet of the Confederation begins its Session of sleep. So much for the present—no one seems to bother much about the future !

To Queen Victoria.¹

SHRUBLANDS,² 3rd July 1851. *Half-past five p.m.*—Just arrived here, and already threatened with the intelligence, that the messenger will lose the last train from Ipswich, if he does not start directly. I have locked myself in to send you two lines as a token of my life and love. I was at the section punctually by eleven, and got through it by three. Enclosed you will find a plan of the battle, which will give

<i>Sections</i>	<i>Arrival</i>	<i>Departure</i>	<i>Probable papers</i>
A. Physical .	Half-past eleven	Quarter-past twelve	1. BOND, Astronomical Observations by Electro-Magnetism, and Daguerreo types of the Moon. 2. COL. REID, On Mooring Ships in Revolving Gales.
B. Chemical .	Quarter-past twelve	Half to one	MERCER, On the Contraction of Calico as shown in the Great Exhibition, Playfair.
E. Geography .	Quarter to one	Half-past one	1. TCHITACHEFF, Travels in Asia Minor, and Murchison. 2. ASA WHITNEY, On a Rapid Intercourse between Europe and Asia.
C. Geology .	Twenty to two	Half-past two	Either Papers on Crags by Phillips and Owen, or Drifts, by Murchison and Hopkins, Sedgwick and Lyell.

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 380.

² Sir William Middleton's.

you information as to the subjects and persons of the essays and the essayists. My reception has been everywhere most cordial and hearty. Bunsen is here, and Van de Weyer, Cust, Argyle, Murchison, Lords Stradbroke, Monteagle, and Wrottesley, &c. The house has been recently built by Barry ; the situation very pretty and high. You will be feeling somewhat lonely and forsaken among the two and a half millions of human beings in London ; and I too feel the want of only one person to give a world of life to everything around me.

I hope to fall into the arms of this one person by 7.30 to-morrow evening, and remain till then, your faithful and loving, A.

To Lord John Russell, Prime Minister.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 20th December 1851.

MY DEAR LORD JOHN,—You will readily imagine, that the news of the sudden termination of your difference with Lord Palmerston has taken us much by surprise, as we were wont to see such differences terminate in his carrying his points, and leaving the defence of them to his colleagues, and the discredit to the Queen.

It was quite clear to the Queen, that we were entering upon most dangerous times, in which Military Despotism and Red Republicanism will for some time be the only powers on the Continent, to both of which the Constitutional Monarchy of England will be equally hateful. That the calm influence of our institutions, however, should succeed in assuaging the contest abroad must be the anxious wish of every Englishman, and of every friend of liberty and progressive civilisation. This influence has been rendered null by Lord Palmerston's personal manner of conducting the foreign affairs, and by the universal hatred which he has excited on the Continent. That you could hope to control him has long been doubted by us, and its impossibility is clearly proved by the last proceedings. I can therefore only congratulate you, that the opportunity of the rupture should have been one in which all the right is on your side.

The distinction which Lord Palmerston tries to establish between his personal and his official acts is perfectly untenable. However much you may attempt such a distinction in theory, in practice it becomes impossible. Moreover, if the expression of an opinion is in harmony with the line of policy of a Government, it may be given officially ; if differing, it must mislead, as it derives its importance

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 418.

only as coming from the Minister, and not from the private individual.

To Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 29th Dec. 1851.—I cannot complain about this last year. The Great Exhibition, the problems of which often gave me much worry, went through in an unbelievably happy and glorious manner without the slightest *contretemps* to complain of. And now the year is ending with the lucky circumstance for us that the man¹ who has been embittering our whole lives by setting us the shameful alternatives of endorsing his misdeeds throughout Europe, or of raising the Radical Party here to power under his leadership, or creating an open breach between him and the Crown, which would have plunged the only country that still enjoys liberty, law and order into the general chaos—that man has cut his own throat. “Give a man enough rope and he will hang himself” is an old English proverb, with which we have often tried to comfort ourselves; it has come true once again. . . . We shall have plenty of trouble with Palmerston, who is raging,—also with a Reform Bill which has been promised; its being properly managed is a matter of considerable importance to the whole of Europe.

To Prince William of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 27th January 1852.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—My delay till the end of January in offering my best wishes for the New Year will seem rather odd to you, and it will not make it better when I remind you that I still owe you thanks for a friendly letter written on November 12th. I wish you all the same every happiness, and express my thanks, trusting to your kind friendship to accept both.

Your letter complains of Palmerston’s action with regard to Kossuth and the other refugees.² I wished to say nothing about it, as we were just then in the middle of a violent dispute with the Government about those very misdeeds. The Government condemned Palmerston’s behaviour, but were afraid of breaking with

¹ Lord Palmerston, who as Foreign Minister had shown open sympathy with Louis Napoleon’s *coup d'état*.

² Kossuth, the leader of the Hungarian Revolution, had fled with others to England, and were received with such extreme sympathy by Palmerston, that relations between England and Austria were threatened.

him over that popular question. Since then he has himself made it easy for his colleagues by suddenly becoming Louis Napoleon's accomplice. That was too much of a good thing, and the pitcher broke at last after so many journeys to the well. There is no doubt that now he is thinking solely of revenge, but I think him less dangerous in opposition than he would be if in power, for there are not at his disposal those vast possibilities of doing harm, which the Foreign Office gave him.

Lord Granville will not impair or neglect England's Liberal constitutional policy, which is the national policy ; whatever happens he will remain a gentleman and treat other States kindly and fairly.

We now are the sole representatives of Liberal and constitutional institutions in Europe, and must be prepared to be utterly hated by the reactionary Governments, which sometimes have a dark suspicion that England's example will end by being victorious. You might be the champions on the Continent and save Germany's future independence, if you had not a Manteuffel at the head of your Government and could agree on the interpretation of your Constitution, which still appears to be a matter of doubt, as it was from 1841 to 1848. It is however a Constitution, and it should above all things not be on new-fangled lines, for I cannot see how it could be made old. The desire to make it Conservative is both natural and right, but there are so many different interpretations of the word Conservative. The wish to have Chambers, and yet to deny them all influence on the Government's policy may be some people's idea of Conservatism. To me it appears a training for revolution, such as was successfully achieved by the smaller States (by the same process) between 1819 and 1848.

The Paris turnover is going extraordinarily quickly ; Louis Napoleon will soon have run the whole gamut of arbitrary tyranny. The violent seizure of the poor Orleans' entire property is a crime that cries to heaven. Feeling here, from the highest Tories to the most extreme Radicals, is equally bitter and indignant against the Prince President. Schwartzenberg, Narvaez and Palmerston are the ones who approve of his conduct. I do not venture to suggest that Persigny may not be working for an unholy alliance between Austria and Louis Napoleon. But just at present it might be wise not to put Prussia's policy into the hands of the Vienna Cabinet, but to set your house in order as far as may be.

As to our own health and our children's well-being I have nothing but good to report in spite of the exceptionally mild winter, which, being so unusual and unnatural, cannot be healthy. Bertie has a new tutor in the shape of Mr. Frederick W. Gibbs, a most capable young man. Mr. Birch takes up a living at Lord Wilton's of £3,000 a year with four curates, and no one can blame him !

Internally the country is quiet, and the public is occupied and bothered by the idea of a possible French invasion, and the Government are busy on the new scheme of Parliamentary Reform. One cannot say with certainty if it will make democracy too strong or not. The intention is to be as moderate as possible ; the danger however is that, owing to the prevalent lack of enthusiasm for reform, there may not be sufficient driving power to force through the Government's measure, and that the failure of the Bill, and with it that of the Ministry, might make it a question for the masses, followed later on by a far more democratic solution.

If it goes through intact, the Bill will give English institutions even greater strength and security throughout the nation than they already enjoy, and to have gained this in this interval of peace will be of the greatest importance ; for after the reactionary excesses in Paris, Vienna and Italy, and the new incapacity and slackness for any good cause on the part of the Confederation in Germany, we must be prepared for extremes of mischief on the part of democracy all over the Continent.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

OSBORNE, 23rd May 1852.—I need not tell you what you must divine, that you have left behind you a frightful void in my life, and I am left now to brood silently over the ideas which I might have talked over with and had confirmed by you. I will, therefore, have recourse to reading, in which I confess to being very remiss, and which, unless pursued with method and regularity, is not particularly attractive.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.²

3rd Sept. 1852.—Balmoral is in full splendour, and the people there are very glad that it is now entirely our own.

The deer were so polite as to show themselves yesterday close to the house in the sacred number of three. Whether from a reveren-

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 448.

² *Ibid.*, p. 462.

tial feeling on our part, or from excessive lack of skill, I know not, but three of us, to wit, Lord Malmesbury, Col. Phipps, and myself, shot, like the Lord of Freudenfeuer at the Dragon, and missed them, each of the others twice, and I, as became my rank and station, four times.

Voilà les nouvelles du Village. Not to go on longer playing the village gossip, I take my leave.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

BALMORAL, 6th September 1852.

YOUR MAJESTY,—I write to you to-day under stress of the embarrassment into which the Queen's Government is plunged by the pressure brought by yours to carry into force at this moment the Protocol concerning Neuenburg¹ [Neuchâtel].

Lord Derby and Lord Malmesbury both consider that to march in there just now would be most undesirable, in fact, a menace to the peace of Europe. They are taken aback by the proposal, since they only consented to the Protocol on Prussia's undertaking to refrain from any active step and to leave the time and manner of the negotiation to the decision of the Powers, and the initiative to England. Although an official reply from the Government will explain England's inability to approve of this step, I consider it incompatible with my feelings of devotion and attachment to Your Majesty, not to assure you personally that the objections expressed in the reply do not fully represent the anxiety felt by the Government in regard to it. At the same time, the latter are animated by very real feelings of friendship towards Your Majesty and Prussia and earnestly desire a solution of the Neuenburg affair which will satisfy Your Majesty. I cannot refrain from adding my opinion to that of the Government, that the only way to effect this will be by way of negotiation and by convincing the Swiss Confederation, and proving to them the usefulness, and in fact the necessity, of arriving at a legal agreement with Your Majesty; whereas menaces would only raise fresh obstacles, and forcible measures would produce greater evils than could possibly arise if you could find it in your power to refrain from using force.

If Prussia insisted on using force, she would have to undertake a

¹ In 1848 the monarchy was overthrown in the Swiss Canton of Neuchâtel, of which the King of Prussia was personal over-lord. King Frederick William IV, however, did not renounce his rights, and the Powers recognised them by the London Protocol of 1852. It was not until the Treaty of Paris, 1857, that Frederick William IV gave up his rights.

most awkward war with Switzerland, for she would have no direct line of military operations, or else she would have to arrange for a line of march through France, and she could hardly succeed in doing that. England is obviously unable to bring military pressure to bear on Switzerland. If Austria should contemplate going to war along with Prussia against Switzerland, France would scarcely permit it, and the President certainly could not do so. And would France help to capture Neuenburg in order to replace the King of Prussia as sovereign over it? The point of honour, which is Your Majesty's motive in demanding restoration of your rights over Neuenburg, would gain little by those means. A war waged against Switzerland by Austria, Prussia and France in combination, might lead to most unforeseen consequences, in no case to the advantage of Prussia. I suggest nothing as to whether the spectacle of such an action and the heroic resistance which the Swiss would offer, might not unloose all the revolutionary spirits of Europe.

All that Your Majesty could possibly desire as regards Neuenburg—seeing that a nominal sovereignty over it can be of no real value to Prussia—consists of the following : There should be no appearance of Your Majesty having, from weakness or powerlessness, permitted a mob of Radicals to trample on the rights assured to you by the Treaties of 1815, and to persecute Your Majesty's loyal devoted subjects. Seeing that Your Majesty has induced the Great Powers by the London Protocol to re-affirm recognition of those rights, the responsibility is theirs to see that they are secured, and no blame can attach to Your Majesty. You may rest assured that here no efforts will be spared in finding a suitable way to restore those rights on a legal basis. Since, in contradistinction to this, an untimely and violent invasion can only lead to grave complications in Europe, with no prospect of a satisfactory solution of the matter under consideration, I feel obliged to urge Your Majesty to leave the conduct of this affair in the hands of the British Government, who, I repeat, are animated by every desire to meet Your Majesty's wishes.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 15th Oct. 1852.—. . . Your appeal to me to take the place of the Duke for the country and the world shall

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 469. The Duke of Wellington died on 14th September 1852.

stimulate me to fresh zeal in the fulfilment of my duties. The position of being merely the wife's husband is, in the eyes of the public, naturally an unfavourable one, inasmuch as it presupposes *inferiority*, and makes it necessary to demonstrate, which can only be done by deeds, that no such inferiority exists. Now *silent* influence is precisely that which operates the greatest and widest good, and therefore much time must elapse before the value of that influence is recognised by those who can take cognisance of it, while by the mass of mankind it can scarcely be understood at all. I must content myself with the fact that constitutional monarchy marches unassailably on its beneficent course, and that the country prospers and makes progress.

To Prince William of Prussia.

OSBORNE, 1st December 1852.

DEAR COUSIN,—Count Nostitz, who handed me your dear letter of the 6th, will carry this answer back to you. Since he will be able to inform you of the sad, but most solemn, funeral ceremony by word of mouth better than I can in writing, I must refer you to him and his two companions. It was most interesting for us to have these three gentlemen here, and we are very grateful to the King for the Mission and for his choice of the persons composing it. No eye was dry when the good old Duke was lowered to his resting-place, and nothing could excel the behaviour of the 2½ millions of people who watched the funeral procession.

With the Duke a token of the glorious past has been buried. Once again in the West there reappears a token of the old danger for Europe and of humiliation for Germany. May Germany remain united, and may the Governments recollect that their well-disciplined armies were once defeated by the spirit of France, but that when princes and peoples united to take up the sword, Napoleon's power was shattered. Let the main object in view be to set right internal defects and to satisfy the people's just claims to be represented and to be considered in the ordering of the life of their State. I see nothing of this in the policy of the Coalition princes at Darmstadt, who are sacrificing their people's interest for purely personal and dynastic objects (or should I say prejudices). God grant that your Government may not bind the permanent interests of Prussia irrevocably to Austria, and under the hallucination of conciliating

that Power, cripple for all time the material and moral demands of North Germany.

We are well and cheerful, and recovering somewhat in needed peace and quiet. In Parliament we are going through a fire-test in which the parties will go into the melting-pot. Palmerston is the quicksilver in the amalgam, and is a menace to any combination. Free Trade is now accepted as a principle by everyone, so it followed that those who had persecuted Peel and made his life a burden, would be very severely dealt with. Nevertheless the present short Session will go through without a change of Ministers ; more than this I will not say now.

To the Same.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 23rd February 1853.

DEAR COUSIN,—I offer belated thanks in the second half of February for your dear letter at the close of the year. Like this winter it is late and goes to you a bit frozen. I write from Buckingham Palace and in the middle of the new Parliamentary Session.

The formation of the new Ministry,¹ which I observe you would have preferred without its Whig members, would not have been possible without them, and we should not have had the strong Government on which we so much depend. I can demonstrate to you that we not only have the best talents and administrative and Parliamentary experience all combined under honest Aberdeen, but that the Government are united among themselves and have been called to take the helm of the ship of State by the public opinion of the country. The Minister you most fear (Palmerston) is Home Secretary, and decidedly the most Conservative member of the Cabinet. Lord Melbourne's evidently very welcome £12,000 a year² has brought him round to this.

Two days ago Lord John Russell was succeeded at the Foreign Office by Lord Clarendon, whom you know. Lord John leads the House of Commons without portfolio, a somewhat unconstitutional innovation in my opinion, only to be excused by his lack of physical strength.

I fully expected that Lord Malmesbury's recognition of Louis

¹ Lord Aberdeen, with a following of Peelites and Whigs, turned out Disraeli's Government on 28th December. Lord John Russell was at first Foreign Secretary. Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer.

² Lord Palmerston had married Lord Melbourne's sister and heiress.

Napoleon as Emperor would rather disgust you. I feel the same, and Lord Derby confessed to me he covered his face with both hands when he heard his colleague's laudatory speech. It was a mistake, to be buried along with others.

The uniformity in the steps towards recognition of the Empire, which you hoped for, between ourselves and the Continental Powers was impossible for two reasons : First, because you (Russia, Austria and Prussia) last summer came to a secret agreement (of whose existence we knew of, but not of its provisions) as to the steps you intended to take ; second, because the Emperor of Russia, who sets the pace among you, pursues a purely personal policy ; whereas ours can only follow the principle of recognising the *de facto* Government, and once it is firmly established, that of absolutely impartial observation of *la courtoisie des Rois*, whatever the Government's origin may have been. Yet the Protocol of December showed that the Powers are agreed on paper, and I notice with genuine pleasure this unanimity increasing daily, seeing that the character of the ruler of France is becoming as well realised on the Continent as it was by us from the start, now that political perception is less violently disturbed than it was by morbid admiration for the suppressor of Democracy and Socialism. His readiness, the moment despotism ceases to serve his aims, to employ Democracy as a tool, is clearly shown by his recent marriage announcement.¹

Also I do not think I am libelling him in saying that he has not entirely broken off his former connection with the Italian democrats. How tragic were the recent events at Milan, the work of the insane Mazzini, who, himself lying low in Switzerland, pulls the strings of the conspiracy. How tragic the recent executions and oppressions throughout Northern Italy, justified though they are by necessity. And above all how tragic the murderous attempt on the life of the poor young Emperor [Francis Joseph]. All this is bound to leave behind it a deep impression in Austria, and make it more and more uncertain how the tottering Imperial State may produce law and order out of this alternation of criminal excesses and drastic repressions.

¹ This was a declaration made by the Emperor in person to the Senate and Legislative Body, that " frankly taking up before Europe the position of one who has arrived at fortune, a glorious position when supported by the free suffrage of a great people," he had selected a bride, who, like the Empress Josephine, was not the issue of a royal family, " preferring a woman whom he loved and respected to one whom he did not know."

This uncertainty should make Austria incapable of dictating the rules by which Prussia is to set her own political life in order ; nor would it be to Prussia's good that her general policy should be subservient to Austria's needs.

A Prussian alliance with Belgium, Holland and England would, as you say at the beginning of your letter, correspond well with the natural order of things. I think however that it would be stronger and more workable, if it rested genuinely on similarity of political opinion and attitude, rather than on *ad hoc* treaties. As regards guaranteeing Belgian independence, I think that the guarantee by the Great Powers, if seriously appealed to and loyally and promptly administered by the parties interested, will work more impressively than a new and narrower defensive alliance. Our new Ministry will be just as firm and loyal to their engagements respecting the guaranteeing of Belgian neutrality as their predecessors were prepared to be.

I regret that at the end of your letter you again express a doubt whether conditions in Prussia are sufficiently matured for representative institutions to be possible. To me it all seems to depend on establishing on a firm basis the principle that the governed must obey the rulers set over them. In olden times this obedience was one of custom and fear. Now custom has broken down, and feelings of awe no longer exist, and as society stands to-day, they will not easily be replaced. The obedience of the future must be founded on conviction,—a conviction that the State system really satisfies the needs of the people, meets their legitimate demands, and serves their interests. How to achieve these conditions ? In former times there were high and praiseworthy Governments, high and wise officials, who possessed the governing wisdom of God's grace, and were the only ones competent to judge what the needs, requirements and interests of society consisted of. In these latter days of advance in education and civilisation, society knows fairly well what it needs and desires, and strives not without justice against an assumed monopoly of knowledge, which the official body claim as their own. " Each man knows best where his shoe pinches," says the proverb. Thus, if obedience is to be restored, the only way to it is to give society the means of making up its own mind about it, being at one with the Government, and of being assured that the ruler is entrusting the carrying out of necessary government measures to a body of officials whom it (society) can trust to do the work with honest conviction

and keenness, in a spirit of co-operation. Nothing can effect all this except a representative Constitution with responsible Ministers and unfettered expression of public opinion. I should say rather that Prussia is ripe for nothing else. If these requirements are honestly met, the specialised form may be as monarchical and aristocratical as it likes. I do not propose to lay down the law about that, although I know that the constitutionalists on the Continent have always used it as a *cheval de bataille*.

We think of spending Easter at Windsor ; it falls early this year. In April we expect a further increase of the family, which will soon raise me to the dignity of a Patriarch !

*To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.*¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 23rd March 1853.—I believe I still owe you an answer to your dear letter of the 25th ult. The object of these lines is to transfer this debt to you, and to set your mind at rest as to the reports, probably much exaggerated, of the fire here. Victoria is quite well, and has suffered absolutely nothing from the agitation into which we were naturally all thrown by the danger. We had to battle with the flames from ten at night till four in the morning before we got them completely under ; nevertheless the injury was confined to one tower of the Castle, which has been gutted by the flames through four stories. Had the fire got beyond the tower, it would have been impossible to save the Castle. As it is, the beautiful dining-room is the principal loss. The ladies remained in the drawing-room hard by the whole night, and were very calm and self-possessed.

To Prince William of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 8th April 1853.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I used the Telegraph yesterday to inform you of Victoria's safe delivery,² and I hope it (the Telegraph) will operate quicker than it did with your friendly enquiry about our fire, which stuck at Calais for two days before it could be sent forward. I must now use a goose-quill to write to you, and add that Victoria has had a very good night, and is remarkably well. The infant is flourishing. I add also a wish of Victoria's and my own, which I set down with

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 490.

² The birth of Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany.

undiplomatic directness : "Would the good cousin be so friendly as to consent to be a godmother at the christening ?" Would you be so good as to set this proposal before her, and put in a good word for it yourself ?

The King of Hanover, Ernest Hohenlohe and Mary Cambridge are to be the other godparents, and the ceremony will take place in the middle of June. If you could take a trip over here for it yourself it would be a great pleasure to us. I am modest and only ask you to consider it at leisure.

To Mr. Gladstone, Chancellor of the Exchequer.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 19th April 1853.

MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,—I must write to you a line in order to congratulate you on your success of last night.² I have just completed a close and careful perusal of your speech, which I admire extremely, and I have heard from all sides that the effect it has produced is very good. Trusting that your Christian humility will not allow you to become dangerously elated, I cannot resist sending you the report which Lord John Russell made to the Queen for your perusal ; knowing that it will give you pleasure, and that these are the best rewards which a public man can look for. Ever yours truly, ALBERT.

To Queen Victoria.³

CAMP OF CHOBHAM, 7 a.m., 25th June 1853.

J'ECRIS à ma femme,—I have this moment received your dear lines. Yesterday evening was very fine and warm, but in the course of the night there was a dreadful storm, which made the tents seem almost like cabins at sea. It has been raining since five, and it looks very doubtful whether it will cease. Still, at this moment, there is a lark singing, which is a good sign. About nine we shall have to turn out ; I will join my brigade (Guards). The Staff dined with me yesterday, and I walked with George [Duke of Cambridge] till half-past ten.

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. ii, p. 542.

² Mr. Gladstone's Budget imposed a duty for the first time on the succession to real property ; he retained the Income Tax for two years longer, at its then rate of sevenpence in the pound on incomes above £150, and extended it, at the rate of fivepence in the pound, to incomes between £100 and £150. Ireland was made subject to the tax, but received relief in other directions. Remissions of indirect taxes were also made, and one of these, the repeal of the Advertisement Duty, was carried against the Government. The Budget was carried by a majority of 71.

³ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 495.

The tents are convenient, but both damp and hot during the night. I am delighted that you got through your day so well. To-day will also run away. Now I say,—

“ Du, Du liegst mir im Herzen,
 Du, Du liegst mir im Sinn,
 Du, Du machst mir viel Schmerzen,
 Weisst nicht wie gut ich Dir bin.”

Your devoted, A.

To Prince William of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 5th August 1853.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—Bunsen has communicated a telegraphic despatch from you to ask if it is true that the Fleet is to be reviewed at Spithead on the 11th. I interpret the question according to my heart's desire, and hasten to write that weather permitting, the naval manœuvres will take place on that day, and will be well worth seeing, and it would give Victoria and myself much pleasure if the spectacle might induce you to come over. A steamer leaves Ostend for Dover daily at 4.30, and from there the coastal railway would bring you by Hastings and Brighton in three hours to Portsmouth, and after that a crossing of 50 minutes to Osborne, where a room, bed and a friendly welcome will be ready for you. We go there on Tuesday the 9th. If you arrive on the 10th, we shall go all together to the Review on the 11th. If the weather is too bad for it, you would have to give us a little more time until it could take place. Sea-water baths can be provided at Osborne, so that your cure need not be interrupted. I hope you will allow yourself to be tempted.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

OSBORNE, 16th Aug. 1853.—The great naval review has come off, and surpassed all that could have been anticipated. The gigantic ships of war, among them the *Duke of Wellington* with 131 guns (a greater number than was ever before assembled in one vessel), went, without sails, and propelled only by the screw, *eleven miles an hour*, and this against wind and tide! This is the greatest revolution effected in the conduct of naval warfare which has yet been known. Steam as well as sailing vessels will of necessity be cast aside as useless, and men-of-war with the auxiliary screw will take their

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 500.

place.¹ This will cost a great deal of money till the change is effected, and render many fleets, like the present Russian one, useless. We have already sixteen ships at sea and ten in an advanced state. France has no more than two, and the other Powers none. On Thursday, 300 ships and 100,000 men must have been assembled on one spot. The fleet carried 1,100 guns and 10,000 men. The weather, moreover, was magnificent, and the impression which the spectacle presented sublime. I write all this, because last autumn we were bewailing our defenceless state, and because you know, that without wishing to be *mouche de coche*, I must rejoice to see that achieved which I had struggled so long and hard to effect.

To the Same.²

BALMORAL CASTLE, 12th September 1853.

DEAR STOCKMAR,—You shall have a letter to-day from the Highlands, and written with a sprig in my cap³ too. I have knocked over four stags and they adorn the new venison larder.

The new house is up one story, and with its dressed granite, promises to present a noble appearance. The work is terribly hard, and for cheapness' sake the walls will have to be carried up several feet thick. The workmen, who have to be brought here from a distance and to camp in wooden hutments, have already struck several times, which is now quite the fashion all over the country. This is no doubt fomented by the great amount of emigration, and the vast newly opened markets of Australia, China, and California. To-day's *Economist* shows that last year (ending 5th July), our Exports have gone up about twenty millions sterling. Simultaneously with this, despite the immense influx of gold from California and Australia, there is at this moment a deficiency of eleven millions of bullion in the Bank, and the rate of interest, which in February, when Gladstone brought forward his Conversion of Stock, stood at 2 per cent., has gone up to 4 ! Corn, coals, and other necessities of life, as well as wages, have also gone up considerably. . . .

¹ The British Admiralty went over to screw propellers in 1852–53. The first ship of the line thus equipped was the *Agamemnon*, launched in 1852. The *Duke of Wellington*, launched in the same year, was then the largest ship of the line (a three-decker), and was designed as a sailing ship; she received an auxiliary screw, as did 16 others, some of which had been built in 1809. Before that the only steam-ships had been paddle-boats.

² See Martin, vol. ii, p. 506.

³ The German sportsman's sign of success in having killed a stag is a sprig of fir stuck in his hat or cap.



The Royal Family at Luncheon at Carn Lochan

From the picture by James Stephenson, after Carl Haag

PART FOUR
THE CRIMEA

THE war complications of the years 1853-56 were destined to bring into being a political position far removed from Albert's cherished hopes and productive of deep disappointment to him.

The Emperor Nicholas I considered that the moment had arrived for realising Russia's ancient dreams of domination on the Golden Horn. He had rescued Prussia and Austria from revolution, and bound them to him by ties of gratitude. He thought England unwilling, and France unable, to uphold Turkey, which was on the verge of collapse, against him. He felt certain that he would be able without great effort to tear away from Turkey the Danubian Principalities of Roumania, Moldavia, and Wallachia, and also Servia and Bulgaria, and convert them into Russian Protectorates ; he thought moreover that he could bring the Greek Christians in Turkey under Russian protection. But the result turned out very differently from the Tsar's expectation. The Russians invaded the Danubian Principalities on 3rd July, 1853 ; whereupon the Turks, supported by England and France, declared war on 29th September, and a squadron, composed of British and French ships, sailed into the Bosphorus. On 30th November the Russians destroyed a Turkish squadron at Sinope, and rejected the peace proposals of the Conference of Ambassadors at Vienna. The Anglo-French fleet sailed into the Black Sea. Then began the dramatic *dénouement*.

At the start of the trouble the two antagonists had competed for the armed assistance of Austria and Prussia. For the Western Powers, England and France, Prussia's participation was of essential importance, because Austria would only join them if Prussia was prepared to do so. Prussia, which had no urgent political interests to defend in the Balkans, as Austria had, was, not being an interested party, the pointer on the balance. At the political centre in Berlin there were two parties opposed to each other, representing two political ideas : on the one side all Liberal public opinion and the so-called *Wochenblatt* Party, championing adherence to the Western

Powers, and led by Bunsen, the Minister in London, and the War Minister, von Bonin ; and on the other side the so-called Camarilla, with von Gerlach, Adjutant-General, at its head, urging in favour of adherence to Russia. The struggle between the two parties was embittered by consciousness that the course decided on was bound to have a deep effect on the internal politics of the country. Between them, the King, wavering and undecided, was inclined all along to shirk making up his mind to go to war at all, and to remain neutral.

Albert and Victoria cherished a hope of being able to form a preventive coalition of the four other Great Powers against Russia, powerful enough to deter the Tsar from making war ; Prussia, as things were, by acting in concert with the Western Powers, might have forced the Tsar to give in, and so have prevented war. In June 1853, the Prince of Prussia was in England for the christening of the Duke of Albany, and Albert through him made proposals to the King in this sense. But Frederick William refused to come into line ; he would not allow the decisions of his cousin, Nicholas I, to be dictated by his action, nor would he consent to expose his country to an unnecessary menace on its eastern frontier. However, he sent Count Pourtalés, a man known for his pro-British and anti-Austrian sentiments, to London in December, to state that he would join the Coalition on condition that he was allowed a free hand in settling the internal problems of Germany, and was promised security in the event of any aggression by France or Austria. His proposals were rejected. Prince Albert expressed indignation against Prussia's "wicked policy" ; Prussia wanted to take advantage of the war to "fish in troubled waters."

By the beginning of 1854 it was clear that war could not be avoided. Yet even in February Albert and Victoria still hoped that the partisans of the Western Powers in Berlin might win the day and bring Austria in with Prussia. But Frederick William IV refused to be compelled to take any active part, and his decision went against the *Wochenblatt* Party, and therefore the Western Powers. On 14th March, the day following the ultimatum, and thirteen days before England and France declared war on Russia, General von der Groeben delivered at Osborne the decision of his King to observe armed neutrality. Prussia, and with her Austria, intended to remain out of the war, which would thus be localised. The disappointment and indignation of the English royal couple at the "unworthy" behaviour of their friend in Berlin were unbounded ; there was hardly a hope of "wiser counsels" prevailing in future. Even this hope, frail as it was, was still further shaken when Prussia, feeling her weakness and the need of someone to lean upon, on 20th April concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with Austria (it was

extended further on 20th November), when Bunsen and Bonin were dismissed at the insistence of the Camarilla, and a conflict broke out in the Prussian Royal Family, accompanied by the marked absence of Prince William from Berlin. In the eyes of the English royal couple, Russia had won all along the line.

In London fury against Prussia broke out afresh, when the negotiations for an alliance of the Western Powers with Austria nearly fell through owing to Prussia's declaration that, in that case, she would cease to hold herself bound by the Convention of 1850. The Treaty was signed on 2nd December, and it was naturally expected that Austria would enter the war at once. Prussia was now isolated, and, what was more, she was in danger that Austria, on the grounds of the Austro-Prussian Alliance, might claim her help in the complications arising out of the Austrian Treaty with the Western Powers, and that she (Prussia) might be dragged, against her will and interests, into the war.

To meet this fatal menace, which he imagined that the Catholic-French-Austrian League was directing against him, Frederick William IV at once had recourse to another of the Special Missions that he was so fond of. He sent the Liberal General von Usedom behind the backs of the two Foreign Offices to London. His mission was to impress on the English royal couple the menace of a Catholic League and the consequent necessity of a *rapprochement* between the Protestant Powers, and to offer to station a Prussian army-corps in Upper Silesia. By these manœuvres on all sides the feeble policy of Prussia automatically gained time, and she successfully avoided being involved in a war in which indeed she had no practical interest ; moreover, she prevented Austria from entering the war with results for her impossible to foresee. There was naturally no appreciation in London of either the motives or the methods of such diplomacy, and since Usedom was unable to make the only promise worth attending to—that of Prussia's adhesion to the Western Powers—these proposals of Frederick William's were held to be too indefinite to be worth discussion ; in the eyes of Albert and Victoria it was Prussia's fault that the bloody war had to continue.

The death of the Emperor Nicholas I on 2nd March, 1855, put an end to the efforts of the Western Powers to extend the theatre of war. Only from the Kingdom of Sardinia, which had joined them on 26th January, 1855, did they accept reinforcements in May. Prussia was no longer in danger of having to take part. Nevertheless, relations between Germany and England remained as strained as ever. Two fresh proposals, which Frederick William IV laid before the Queen after the event of 2nd March, were likewise rejected. The resentment in London against Prussia increased still

further during the year. This sentiment of animosity was constantly being fed afresh, for on the military side the British were not being very successful in comparison with their French allies, while on the political side Austria was being no more obliging than at the beginning, and for this public opinion held Prussia responsible ; at the turn of the year there was actually a demand for war with Prussia. But though both Albert and Victoria were highly angered at Prussia's neutrality, they were not going to let it go as far as that. At the moment of crisis they did all in their power to avoid going to extremes. The Queen wrote a letter of warning to her friend, Princess Augusta, in Berlin, and urged her Foreign Secretary, Lord Clarendon, to refrain from any step which might lead to war. In January next year she stopped a Note being despatched to Prussia, which would have meant certain war. In fact, it was due to the Queen's personal intervention that extreme measures in England's relations with Germany were placed out of the question.

The new Tsar, Alexander II, did his best to finish up the war, which came to an end in the Crimea with the fall of Sebastopol on 10th September, 1856. He considered the capture of Kars in November as preserving Russia's honour in arms, and consented, on receiving the Austrian ultimatum of 16th January, 1856, to the terms of the Western Powers regarding himself, and prepared for peace negotiations. Prussia longed to pose as a Great Power, and made terrific efforts to be admitted to the negotiations. The unworthy part played by her representative in Paris aroused unconcealed scorn in the breasts of Albert and Victoria. The Peace of Paris, 30th March, put an end for the time being to Russia's claims in the Balkans ; Turkey was ensured against spoliation and loss of territory. A seal was set on the restoration of the ancient friendship between England and France, proved in the brotherhood of arms ; the Emperor of the French, having triumphed gloriously in the struggle for a civilising idea, had become the strongest man in Europe ; Russian enmity against Austria became permanent, and was destined to produce terrible consequences.

The irritation of Victoria and Albert against Prussia, and particularly against her King, did not die away ; in spite of it, however, they did not let themselves be diverted from the line they had taken up respecting an understanding between England and Germany. In the midst of the mistakes and misunderstandings of the war, a scheme was realised, which, ever since the Great Exhibition of 1851, had been planned by Victoria and Albert on the one hand, and on the other by William and Augusta ; Prince Frederick William, the heir to the Prussian throne and future German Emperor, proposed marriage to Victoria, the Princess Royal, and was accepted.

1853-1856

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

BALMORAL, 5th Oct. 1853.—Come soon if you can. Your counsel and support will be of extraordinary value to us !

The Turks have declared war ; what will the four Powers do ? By this our mediation policy is knocked on the head. We cannot look on and see the Porte destroyed by Russia ; active assistance is European war—if it succeeds, then fanatical oppression of the Christians in the East becomes in the ascendant ! To leave the Porte in the lurch is death to the Ministry, to declare war is not much else. Graham is here, the Cabinet meets in London to-morrow, we go south this day week, and shall be there on Friday.

To Prince William of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 7th November 1853.

DEAR COUSIN,—After this long pause in our correspondence it is a great pleasure to me to get your dear letter of the 22nd. I must thank you for it and for your permission to read your interesting comments on your recent conversations with the Emperor of Russia. We were certain that the Emperor is longing for forbidden fruits. That he was so much mistaken as to the amount of opposition the European Powers would set up against these cravings appeared to us probable. But we could not tell whether he would drive this opposition to extremes, and it may have been his intention to leave us in the dark. The Berlin episode is of the highest importance to us, as we must conclude that it is a point of honour to him to start a war with England and France to satisfy his longings, whilst he is

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 519.

afraid that his enemies in those countries may desire to leave him no choice between such a war and an injury to his honour.

This could not possibly be the aim of our Allied Governments, and I can assure you that there is no reason for his fear that we should make evacuation of the Principalities a preliminary condition for further negotiations. On the contrary, we desire peace, and the latest proposals, which have gone to Constantinople and about which Bunsen will have reported, will show that we have not been behind-hand in our efforts to attain that object.

Now there are new difficulties in Turkey, where the fanaticism which has been stirred up for resistance against Russia must naturally be a serious obstacle to acceptance of suggestions for friendly compromise. The Emperor bears the sole responsibility for this dangerous situation.

I might describe the state of political feeling in England as follows : all the politicians agree that Russia must not be allowed to get the best of Turkey either diplomatically or in war, and that war must not be shirked for the warding off of that disaster. They are united also in thinking it of the highest importance to preserve peace. If the Turks are the obstacle to this aspiration, it is still England's interest that Turkey shall not fall into the hands of Russia. But there are differences of opinion as to whether, even if the Turks behave reasonably, they ought still to be supported by England and thus helped in cases where they are unreasonable, or whether the Turks should be left to their fate, and England should fight solely for interests that are purely European. I myself am inclined to this latter view, in spite of the difficulty in carrying it out.

The position adopted by Prussia has at this moment become very useful for the maintenance of peace, since it has convinced the Emperor when calculating the chances at the moment of decision, that he cannot count on an alliance of the three northern Powers to balance the Anglo-French alliance. Such an alliance—to put it shortly—would necessarily have led to Germany paying with her blood on the Rhine for Russia to gain the advantages she looks forward to beyond the Danube. It was natural for Russia, in order to achieve this alliance, to use as a handle the suspicion that England and France intended to spread revolutionary propaganda all over Europe. I need not assure you that we intended nothing of the kind. Nevertheless I must express my conviction that, if there is

war with Russia, it is sure to turn before long into a general upheaval. Your neutrality will do you no good, and you will probably have to pay the bill for Russia on the Rhine.

I mention the possibility of a rising in Poland. However little it would be owing to any action of ours, it is clear that it would have the sympathy of all the English and French, and a great portion of the German public, and that we, being at war with Russia, for military and strategic reasons could not let this important diversion slip out of our hands. Hence England and France would have to support it with all the forces at their disposal. Quite apart from the interconnection of revolution and the revolutionary parties in the various countries of Europe, the part which Austria and Prussia played in the partitioning of Poland could scarcely remain unaffected by such a rising. Will Prussia in such a case be able to protect her own interests, and at the same time avoid being driven into a conflict—to the advantage of Russia—with England and France? In such a case even a strong State with the cleanest and least vulnerable frontiers might seek in vain for the clear-sightedness, internal strength, and moderation which would be so essential to its Government. If you are really to preserve your neutrality, it must be assumed beforehand that you do not look to taking any active part in the mediation negotiations, and must look forward to the possibility of being forced to defend and enforce your point of view by arms, even against Russia. It would be your only hope of exercising influence in the counsels of Europe, and of being able to use it successfully to moderate and soften down any tendencies towards extremism. So long as England and France are the only Powers ready to prevent—if necessary by arms—the conquest of Turkey, and the other Powers, although ready to take part in the negotiations, are prepared to acquiesce in the spoliation of Turkey if the negotiations lead to no satisfactory result, the influence of these other Powers is practically nil, both with Russia and in the counsels of the Western Powers; and it is from the latter that we specially look for the peaceable counterweight of governments which are less under the influence of public opinion, which is so easily excited.

Omar Pasha's march into the Principalities is a regrettable incident. I could wish that Gortschakoff would knock him on the head, were I sure that it would not further impair moderation at St. Petersburg. It would have a calming effect on Constantinople.

To the Earl of Aberdeen, Prime Minister.¹

OSBORNE, 9th December 1853.

MY DEAR LORD ABERDEEN,—The Queen has consulted with Lord John Russell upon the Reform plan, and on the question of Lord Palmerston's position with regard to it ; and he will doubtless give you an account of what passed. She wishes me, however, to tell you likewise what strikes her with respect to Lord Palmerston. It appears to the Queen clear that the Reform Bill will have no chance of success unless prepared and introduced in Parliament by a *united* Cabinet ; that, if Lord Palmerston has made up his mind to oppose it and to leave the Government, there will be no use in trying to keep him in it, and that there will be danger in allowing him to attend the discussions of the Cabinet, preparing all the time his line of attack ; that if a successor to him would after all have to be found at the Home Office, it will be unfair not to give that important member of the Government full opportunity to take his share in the preparation and deliberation on the measure to which his consent would be asked. Under these circumstances it becomes of the highest importance to ascertain—

1. What the amount of objection is that Lord Palmerston entertains to the Measure ;
2. What the object of the declaration was, which he seems to have made to you.

This should be obtained *in writing*, so as to make all future misrepresentation impossible, and on this alone, a decision can well be taken, and, in the Queen's opinion, even the Cabinet could alone deliberate.

Should Lord Palmerston have stated his objections with the view of having the Measure modified it will be right to consider how far that can safely be done, and for the Queen, also, to balance the probable value of the modification with the risk of allowing Lord Palmerston to put himself at the head of the Opposition Party, entailing as it does the possibility of his forcing himself back upon her as leader of that Party.

Should he on the other hand consider his declaration as a “ notice to quit,” the ground upon which he does so should be clearly put on record, and no attempt should be made to damage the character of

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. ii, p. 568.

the Measure in the vain hope of propitiating him. Ever yours truly,
ALBERT.

To Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

OSBORNE, 19th Dec. 1853.—I am not giving up a hope that we may be able to enforce peace, and yet the folly of both Russians and Turks is unbelievable. One warlike element disappeared two days ago in the shape of Lord Palmerston's retirement from the Cabinet. It is on a matter of purely domestic interest. The great Liberal bully, who wants to force every country to accept free institutions, finds a measure of Reform fathered by Aberdeen, too Liberal. His retirement naturally weakens the Ministry, and gives the Protectionists and Tories a leader in the Commons. He probably intends one of these days to force himself upon us as Prime Minister at their head.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

7th January, 1854.

DEAR STOCKMAR,—We are all well in health, except for a catarrh on my part. Morally, in this new year, as in the old, we have many torments.

The attacks upon me continue with uninterrupted violence, only with this difference, that the Radical press has given them up, and the Protectionist papers now vie with each other in the unscrupulous falsehoods and vehemence with which they persevere in them. There is no kind of treason to the country of which they say I have not been guilty. All this must be borne tranquilly until the meeting of Parliament on the 31st, when Aberdeen and John Russell are prepared to undertake my defence.

The Eastern question makes no progress for the better, and war in spring is becoming every day more probable.

The Cabinet are now at one about the Reform measure, and Palmerston has accepted the *whole* Bill ! Louis Napoleon and he are the idols of the public, “ the favourites for the Derby ! ”

To the Same.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 24th January 1854.

DEAR STOCKMAR,—It has been a great pleasure to me to receive your wise words at a time, when we might fancy we were living in a

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 540.

² *Ibid.*, p. 557.

madhouse. I heartily agree with every word you say. The state of affairs is precisely what you indicate. Only here and there I am able to fill up details, which may have escaped you at a distance. . . .

One main element is the hostility and settled bitterness of the old High Tory or Protectionist Party against me on account of my friendship with the late Sir Robert Peel, and of my success with the Exhibition. This has shown itself in the clearest and strongest way. The stupidity of the Lord Mayor in wishing to erect a monument to me brought matters to a climax. Their fury knew no bounds, when by Palmerston's return to the Ministry that party (which has fallen apart and is now at variance with Disraeli) lost the chance of securing a leader in the Lower House, who would have overthrown the Ministry with the cry for English honour and independence, and against Parliamentary Reform, which, in any case, is not popular. Hatred of the Peelites is stronger in the old party than ever, and Aberdeen is regarded as his representative. To discredit him had this further advantage, that, if he could be upset, the keystone of the vault of the coalition would be smashed, and it must fall to pieces ; then Palmerston and John Russell would have to separate, and the former would take the place he has long coveted of leader to the Conservatives and Radicals. For the same reason, however, it would be our interest to support Aberdeen, in order to keep the structure standing. Fresh reason for the animosity towards us. So the old game was renewed, which was played against Melbourne after the Queen's accession, of attacking the Court, so as to make it clear both to it and to the public, that a continuance of Aberdeen in office must endanger the popularity of the Crown.

Another principal element is the army (the Senior United Service Club, with all its grumblers). Lord Raglan (Fitzroy Somerset) has never forgiven not having been made Commander-in-Chief ; and his thirty years' subordinate position as military secretary, living upon the strength of the old Duke's position, has created for him a large following, who are personally hostile to Lord Hardinge, and regard me as the cause of Lord Hardinge's promotion. The confidential intercourse of Lord Hardinge with myself in all military matters, and the greater attention and insight into these which had become necessary on my part since the Duke's death, have confirmed the belief that Lord H. is just a tool of the Prince ! The resignation of General Browne (the Adjutant-General), after an unseemly wrangle

between himself and Lord H. about a question of discipline (relating to the weight of knapsacks), was made the signal for the outbreak. Palmerston and Browne, the only *independent* Englishmen, were being driven out by Coburg influence ! . . . The Radicals are *ex officio* ever on the watch to detach the Army from the Crown, and to play up to the House of Commons ; so here was an admirable *trouvaille* for them. Military despotism and Court sympathies with Russia, jobs and secret Court influence made such a popular theme, that a section of the press wished for nothing better. But it was also welcome in the Protectionist shop, for there the Somersets were at home, and Hardinge was Peel's bosom friend.

Now, however, I come to that important substratum of the people, on which these calumnies were certain to have a great effect. The nation, slow of thought and uneducated, had never given itself the trouble to consider what really is the position of the husband of a Queen Regnant. When I first came over here, I was met by this want of knowledge and unwillingness to give a thought to the position of this luckless personage. Peel cut down my income, Wellington refused me my rank, the Royal Family cried out against the foreign interloper, the Whigs in office were only inclined to concede to me just as much space as I could stand upon. The Constitution is silent as to the Consort of the Queen ;—even Blackstone ignores him, and yet there he was, and not to be done without. As I kept quiet and caused no scandal, and all went well, no one has troubled himself about me and my doings ; and anyone who wished to pay me a compliment at a public dinner or meeting, extolled my “wise abstinence from interfering in political matters.” Now when the present journalistic controversies have brought to light the fact that I have for years taken an active interest in all political matters, the public, instead of feeling surprise at my modesty and my tact in not thrusting myself forward, fancied itself betrayed, because it felt it had been self-deceived. It has also rushed all at once into a belief in secret correspondence with foreign Courts, intrigues, &c. ; for all this is much more probable, than that thirty millions of men in the course of fourteen years should not have discovered, that an important personage had during all that time taken a part in governing them. If *that* could be concealed, then all kinds of secret conspiracy are possible, and the Coburg conspiracy is proved to demonstration.

Beyond this stage of knowledge, which was certain sooner or

Austria go with us, then the case is altered, and war becomes practically impossible for Russia.

To the Same.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 3rd Feb. 1854.—Victoria has sent you, I know, the paper with the Debates on my impeachment. You will, I trust, be satisfied with the tone of them, and you will find your own views, as developed in your letter, completely reproduced in the Constitutional explanation given both by Aberdeen and Lord John. The impression has been excellent, and my political status and activity, which up to this time have been silently assumed, have now been asserted in Parliament, and vindicated without a dissentient voice. Lord Campbell's judgment as Chief Justice of the Common Pleas is at this moment of great importance. I send you herewith an article from the *Daily News*, which is anything but satisfied and seems quite to feel the accession of strength to the Crown which has resulted from the discussion. From this time forth I shall, of course, continue to be for them “an object of fear and distrust.” The *Herald*, as the Tory organ, is distressed at Ministers having brought before Parliament circumstances, which, from the sacredness of private life and from the fact of the individual being by the Constitution removed *beyond* discussion, “ought not to have been mentioned.” Not bad this, when for six consecutive weeks this journal had slandered and outraged this individual and his private life without intermission.

To Prince William of Prussia.

OSBORNE, 17th March 1854.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I am delighted to see your hand-writing again, and still more so to observe that our views are in agreement at this difficult moment, though they start from different points of view. I think the best thing I can do is to send you in strict confidence a copy of the letter written by Victoria to the King, which General von der Groeben takes back with him.² You will notice a certain difference in the way their two Majesties look at the question.

It does not, however, contain one point which I must mention and of which I am firmly convinced. Prussia and Germany cannot remain neutral, however much Kings and Ministers may desire it.

¹ See Martin, vol. ii, p. 564.

² See next letter.

The struggle which will start in a few days touches European and not merely German interests. Prussia cannot continue to be an onlooker, nor can she have the least hope of stepping in to admonish two parties, heated in the fight, without danger to herself. If she wishes to act as arbiter, she must necessarily be stronger than both the contending parties together, and be prepared to fight them all, if they refuse to bow to her will.

In my eyes there is but one policy to fit critical situations such as the present one ; and that is—to be clear at the start about the rights and wrongs of the question in dispute, and to be consistent in fighting for the right. The special curse inherent in inconsistency is that each different method of dealing with a matter contains its own inherent dangers and disadvantages, which may be foreseen and are inevitable in their effects, and from such effects the present proceedings will in their turn not be immune. Being ourselves now in danger of being injuriously involved in two directions, we are in the peculiar position of being unable to use means to avert one risk without running that of increasing others.

I had a lot of talk with Count von der Groeben, and found him full of noble sentiments, but without the slightest knowledge of the subject under discussion. So it was impossible to argue with him profitably. Nevertheless he will faithfully report that we are not bloodthirsty, but regretfully determined to do what cannot be avoided.

Whatever the future brings, I pray God to shed His blessings on you, yours, and the Fatherland, and beg you to be ever convinced of the unalterable friendship with which I am, Your faithful cousin,

ALBERT.

Queen Victoria to the King of Prussia.¹

OSBORNE, 17th March 1854.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,—General Count von der Groeben has brought me the official letter of your Majesty, as well as the confidential one,² and I send your kind messenger back, with these two

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. iii, p. 21.

² The Prussian Court considered itself under no obligation to engage in the impending struggle, till its own interests became directly involved ; it would not (said Baron Manteuffel, President of the Ministry, on the 18th March) take part, for the protection of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, "in a conflict, the full scope of which cannot yet be apprehended, and the original subject-matter of which does not affect the interests of our fatherland."

answers to you. He will be able to tell you, orally, what I can express only imperfectly in writing, how deep my pain is, after our going so far, faithfully, hand in hand, to see you, at this weighty moment, separating yourself from us. My pain is still further increased by the fact that I cannot even conceive the grounds which move your Majesty to take this step.

The most recent Russian proposals came as an answer to the *last* attempt for an understanding which the Powers believed could be arrived at honourably, and they have been rejected by the Vienna Conference, not because they were not in accordance with the literal wording of the programme, but because they were contrary to the intention of it. Your Majesty's Minister has participated in this Conference and its decision, and when your Majesty now says : "The task of Diplomacy ceases at the exact point where that of the Sovereigns emphatically begins" ; I am unable to assent to such a definition. For what my Ambassador does, he does in my name, and I feel myself not only bound in honour thereby, but also placed under an obligation to take upon myself the *consequences* which the step which he is directed to take may lead to.

The dreadful and incalculable consequences of a War weigh upon my heart not less than on your Majesty's. I also know that the Emperor of Russia does not wish for it. He, none the less, demands from the Porte things which all the Powers of Europe—among them, yourself—have solemnly declared to be incompatible with the independence of the Porte, and the European balance of power. In view of this declaration and of the presence of the Russian Army of invasion in the Principalities, the Powers could not but be ready to confirm their word by action. If "the Turk" now goes into the background, and if the approaching War appears to you as a "War of tendency," this is the case only because the very motives which may induce the Emperor to insist on his demands—in defiance of the opposition of the whole of Europe, and with the danger of a War that may devastate the world, do betray a *distinct tendency*, and because the grave consequences of the War must appear much more momentous than the original ostensible cause of it, which at first appeared only as the request for a key to the back door of a mosque.

Your Majesty asks me "to examine the question in a spirit of love for peace, and even now to build a bridge for the Imperial

honour." Ah, my dear Sir and Brother, all the inventive gifts, all the architecture of diplomacy and of goodwill, have been uselessly wasted during these last nine months in this bridge-building ! The *Projets de Notes, de Conventions, de Protocoles*, etc., etc., have proceeded, by the dozen, from the Chancelleries of the different Powers, and one might call the ink wasted on them another Black Sea. But everything has been shipwrecked against the self-will of your honourable brother-in-law.

If now your Majesty informs me "*that now you mean to persist in complete neutrality,*" and if, on this occasion, you refer us to your Nation, who are said to exclaim with sound common sense : "Acts of violence have been done by the Turks, the Turk has good friends in large numbers, and the Emperor has done us no harm"—I do not understand you. Certainly I should understand this language if I heard it from the Kings of Hanover or of Saxony. But I have, hitherto, looked upon Prussia as one of the Great Powers which, since the peace of 1815, have been guarantors of treaties, guardians of civilisation, defenders of the right, the real arbiters of the Nations ; and for my part I have felt the divine responsibility of this sacred office, without undervaluing at the same time the heavy obligation, not unconnected with danger, which it imposes on me. If you, dear Sir and Brother, abdicate these obligations, you have also abdicated that position for Prussia. And should such an example find imitators, then the civilisation of Europe would be delivered up to the play of winds ; right will then no longer find a champion, the oppressed will find no longer an umpire.

Let not your Majesty believe that what has been said in this letter is aimed at persuading you to change your resolves ; it flows from the affectionate heart of a sister, who could not pardon herself, were she not, at so weighty a moment, to let you see into her inmost soul. So little is it my intention to desire to win you over to our view, that nothing has grieved me more than the suspicion, expressed in your name by General von der Groeben, that England had desired to seduce you from your purpose by opening a prospect of advantages to be gained. The baselessness of such a supposition is evident from the Treaty itself which had been offered to you, and whose most important clause consisted in the promise of the contracting parties, *not to desire in any case to derive from the War any advantage for themselves.*

Your Majesty could not have given a more powerful proof of your unselfishness than by the very fact of attaching your signature to this Treaty.

To come to a close. You suppose that War may already have been declared ; you express, however, at the same time, the hope that it may not already have actually broken out. I cannot unfortunately hold out any hope that the sentence will be followed by any stay of execution. Shakespeare's words :

“ Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel ; but, being in,
Bear it that the opposer may beware of thee,”

are deeply engraved on the hearts of all Englishmen. Sad that they are to find an application at this crisis, in a nation with whom previously nothing prevailed but friendship and affection ! And how much more melancholy must be the present emotions of your Majesty's heart and mind to see such words applied to a beloved brother-in-law, whom yet—however much you love him—your conscience cannot absolve from the crime of having brought upon the world wilfully and frivolously such awful misery !

May the Almighty take you under His protection !

With Albert's most cordial compliments, and our united greetings to the dear Queen, I remain, my much honoured Sir and Brother, Your Majesty's faithful Sister and Friend, VICTORIA R.¹

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 28th April 1854.—. . . Since I last wrote, the wicked world has gone deeper into wrangling and strife, and war is now formally declared, and will be formally begun. I feel for you, for I can understand and forgive your heart for being Russian. All I ask in return is that you will grant me your forgiveness, that my heart is exactly the reverse, and even anticipates the just punishment of Heaven upon the Emperor for the embroilment into which he has thrown Europe by his wilfulness and obstinacy ! This much I will say to vindicate my own honour : for the future I will hold my peace, and not allow the strife, which unhappily has

¹ The King afterwards agreed to the proposed protocol for the preservation of the integrity of Turkey, which was signed at Vienna on the 7th April.

² See Martin, vol. iii, p. 61.

already caused so much misery in the world, to intrude with its disquieting consequences into the unity, love, and peace of our family also, as I have, I grieve to say, already seen it do in many families.

If there were a *Germany* and a *German* Sovereign in Berlin, it could never have happened.

To Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 2nd May 1854.—. . . You will know of Bunsen's fall. I entirely agree with you that it is best for all parties. Bunsen is the exact opposite of a diplomat ; his best qualities are the worst for such a position—particularly his extraordinary productivity and fanciful imagination. In 1848 I saw at least five complete Constitutions for Germany worked out by him down to the smallest detail, and as many for Prussia, each of them based on totally differing principles. His idea of conquering and partitioning Russia was a similar production. The moment I saw it I approached him about the Ernestine line and Poland, and asked him : “ Don't you see how all this may compromise us all and the harm this patriotic phantasy may do us ? ” “ Oh ! that is true ; I am sorry I never thought of that,” was the reply. Bunsen himself will be happier out of diplomacy ; . . . He knows that he has often done me a lot of harm.

To Prince William of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 31st May 1854.

DEAR COUSIN,—I have abstained from writing to you for some time, since in view of the circumstances in Berlin it seemed to be more tactful not to worry you with letters, which, however well meant, were bound to show disapproval of the course pursued by the King and his Government. Now that you have left the scene of struggle, I feel I must write to assure you how deeply I feel for you and the many heart-burnings you must have suffered, and that it is fully realised here how hard you have fought to avert disaster from Prussia, Germany, and Europe.

The treatment of Bunsen has aroused universal indignation here, and I need not add how greatly we regret the departure of that faithful servant of Prussia, that patriotic German, and supporter of

a close connection between Germany and England. General von Bonin's dismissal is a further illustration of the fact that Bunsen's real crime was not "diplomatic mismanagement," but failure in subservience to Russia. For we heard earlier that the King had actually accused Bonin of treason to the Emperor of Russia, and all the world applauded his alleged answer : " I swore my oath of allegiance to Your Majesty and not to the Emperor of Russia." There is no justification for the attitude adopted by the Prussian Court towards the Western Powers. We had all four agreed that Russia had committed a strong act of injustice to an innocent neighbour, and had persisted in it, and that our duty lay in stopping it. In the fulfilment of this duty England and France alone have been bold and unselfish enough to make good their word by action involving heavy sacrifices and dangers, and now the Prussian Court goes on as if it was obliged to occupy an impartial position between these two and sinful Russia. In fact, it betrays obsession by the feeling that it ought to use every means of supporting Russia (short of an open breach for the time being with the Western Powers), and lend a hand against the unfortunate executors of the decree of Europe (to which Prussia herself was a party !).

I don't believe that there is another example of such behaviour in all history ! One would have to be a bigot like Stahl, Groeben, Gerlach, etc., trusting in one's own holiness to get one eventually into the Kingdom of Heaven, to make such scandalous game of right and wrong ; or else so greatly to prefer being a Minister to the chance of entering the Kingdom of Heaven, as Manteuffel seems to do, that he dares serve as marker in this disgraceful match ! May the Almighty protect Germany and avert the natural consequences of human action by some favourable dispensation !

Meanwhile we are arming and taxing ; we have increased the Army by 40,000 men, the Navy by 20,000, and have equipped two large squadrons (all without conscription), and shall find an extra £10,000,000 in taxes which ought to cover this year's war expenditure. France has formed two camps, one of 100,000 men, the other of 50,000. Austria is holding back so far, but is keeping steady, and we hope still for her active assistance.¹

¹ The Duke of Cambridge, on his way to command an infantry division on the Crimea, passed through Vienna. Whilst there he had an interview with Francis Joseph, and got the impression that Austria wished to avoid going to war, but that if she did go, it would not be on the side of Russia.

To the Same.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 6th June 1854.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—Permit me to offer to-day the heartiest congratulations of Victoria and myself to you and the dear cousin on the celebration of your Silver Wedding. May a happy and joyful Golden one follow upon it. Family happiness is the only real one that we may enjoy here below ; we must create it for ourselves, and find in it a sure foundation for love, friendship and trust, strengthened by which we go out to meet the storms of life with calm and courage. For then the wickedness of man cannot reach us. Are not joys shared joys doubled, and sorrows shared sorrows halved, and is not the sharing of our feelings with a dear loving soul an extension and completion of ourselves ?

You must have been pleased to embrace your son again, and I hope that you got him back stronger in health. If the news that Wiwi¹ is engaged to the Regent of Baden is true, I wish them good luck from my heart.

I have received your two dear letters, the first of which crossed mine, which was answered by the other, and I grieved with you over the subjects which they necessarily had to discuss. Since then the King has written a long letter of 16 pages to Victoria, which poor Bunsen had to deliver to her on taking leave. The King's object in writing was to justify Bunsen's and Bonin's dismissal and his treatment of you, and to prove that his policy is not wavering, but strictly consistent. The impression it necessarily produced was one of deep pity for his state of mind and for those about him. Bunsen is condemned for his love of modern philosophic speculation, lack of Christianity, demagogery, official disobedience, and hatred of the Emperor Nicholas—though it is partly to be excused by mental derangement. Bonin is condemned for favouring the Jesuits, military disobedience, Prussian “gloriole,” and hatred of the Emperor Nicholas. You enjoy fraternal shelter, in being hastily granted leave, from the severities of military law, which should have been applied to you for your insubordination !! The policy is still the same—strictly pacifist, supremely neutral ; France ought to “thank God that the King does not carry war across his own frontiers into hers.” He refrains, however, from doing this, first

¹ Princess Louise of Prussia, married in 1856 to Frederick I of Baden.

because he desires to preserve the blessings of peace for his country, secondly because Russia is to blame for all the trouble, and finally his pious feelings forbid him to draw the sword against Old England. I might illustrate the King's "consistency" by the following parable :

A German, a Frenchman and an Englishman witness a street robbery, raise a shout, and rush upon the robber. The Frenchman and the Englishman hold on to him ; but he is immensely strong and armed to the teeth, and they have fearful trouble with him. The Frenchman calls on the German to help, but he replies angrily, " You ought to be thankful I don't bash your head in, and I would do it but for three reasons : I don't want to spoil my clothes, secondly, the man is a robber, and thirdly, I was at school with the Englishman."

That is the essence of your whole policy. And to use the same comparison for the final sentence of your letter, I ask you—are the Englishman and the Frenchman, having at the risk of their lives snatched the booty from the robber, to let him calmly go free, or is the German, who has refused to help, to intervene and say—" You are tired, I am fresh ; woe to him who does the robber any harm, now that the booty has been recovered " ?

To the Same.

OSBORNE, 16th August 1854.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—It was very good of you to send us a message on leaving Ostend, where you were recently so near to us. I was most pleasantly reminded of those good days just a year ago, when you came from there to us to be present at the naval manœuvres. We should have enjoyed a similar visit this time also. But we hesitated to suggest it for fear of causing you embarrassment. Only a very short time ago the King wrote Victoria a long letter, describing in five pages that his disagreement with you was not only quite a thing of the past, but that he rejoiced in the " sunny present " since you had " seen the error of your ways," and it was now quite clear that you and he " had never been divided in your fundamental opinions." I gather, however, from what you say in your letters that in the evacuation of the Principalities, which was effected since that time, you will have found further justification of your former

views. For this evacuation was the direct result of Austria showing she was in earnest.

If Austria had shown the same determination a year ago, the result would have been the same, and it would have removed any inducement to go to war. Now the situation is quite different, and the strategic concentration of the Russian armies cannot be regarded by the Western Powers as a guarantee of peace. Nevertheless I consider that even now a show of determination by Austria and Prussia ought to show the way to an early peace. In default of this determination we shall certainly have to help with expeditions like the one to the Crimea, the military perils of which you describe very graphically in your letters. But the destruction of Sebastopol and the Russian fleet, if successful, will be the surest guarantee of Turkey's future as an independent Power. For if screw-ships are substituted in future for sailing ships, Russia will in future scarcely repeat the mistake of attempting an exhausting campaign on the Danube, but will at the first opportunity send a strong land force by the shortest route from the Crimea to Constantinople and get there before a single soul in Europe receives the news that the expedition has started.

I know very well that our press does more harm to the cause than good on the Continent. It seems to try to realise the proverb to which Dr. Waagen recently introduced me : "*Vox populi, vox Rindvieh*" (blockheads), and it speaks with redoubled vulgarity and violence. There is at all times something wrong with newspaper diplomacy and newspaper strategy, and the political situation at this particular moment is having a most unpropitious effect on it. The Coalition Ministry have united into one Opposition the two extremes, Radicalism and High Toryism, which normally militate against and counter-balance one another. Now both strive to bring the Ministry into contempt as being unpatriotic, and to advertise their own patriotism by immoderate abuse of England's open and hidden enemies and of the conduct of the war. *The Times* which supports the Ministry on the whole, as usual places its own pecuniary interests above every other consideration. By way of increasing its sales beyond those of papers that scream loudest and at the same time of giving a good word to the Government's measures, it outbids anything the others can do in the way of insolence. From the very fact that it is known to favour the Ministry, its insolence is

the more damaging, for it throws an evil light upon them. In the same way it prejudices the management of the war, for it discusses it in public right down to the smallest details.

We are quite well in health except for a pitiless cold in the head, which I have had for six weeks. I intend early next month to go to the French camp in answer to a pressing invitation from the French Emperor. I trust we shall not be attacked there by the cholera, which is raging in London and Paris. I am sure you were sorry to hear of Lord Jocelyn's¹ death by it.

I cannot get the poor King of Saxony² out of my mind.

To Baron von Stockmar.³

OSBORNE, 17th Aug. 1854.—A piece of news from Munich, which I found last night in the *Kölner Zeitung*, has cut me to the soul ! I flew in thought to you, and can picture vividly to myself the deep grief which so sad an event must cause you. Is it then true, that you have lost your beloved brother ? The circumstantiality of the account leaves me scarcely any room for doubt, and yet I go on searching for reasons not to believe it. Let me know soon by some third hand, how you are, for this heavy blow must have told upon you greatly. Would I might be with you, to help to comfort you !

Here too we have had many sad cases, occasioned by the spread of cholera, among which the most noteworthy is the death of Lord Jocelyn in Lady Palmerston's drawing-room ; the malady carried him off in a couple of hours.

To Queen Victoria.⁴

" VICTORIA AND ALBERT," 4th September 1854.
Ten miles from Boulogne. Nine o'clock.

DEAR LITTLE WIFE,—Whilst you sit at breakfast with the children, and are teased by the wasps, of which Arthur is horribly afraid, and makes grimaces at, I sit in the cabin at my table (yours is there empty), and wish you on paper a loving good-morning. The night was superb. After we had thrown you, by blue lights, a parting salutation, which you returned from the *Fairy*, following it by one

¹ Eldest son of the 3rd Earl of Roden.

² King Frederick Augustus II died on 9th August.

³ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 94.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 100-3.

last greeting under a flare of torches, which was left unanswered, we travellers sat upon deck till half-past eleven, in the glorious moonlight. It was close upon twelve when I got to bed in the cabin, which had a very blank and desolate look.

When I got up this morning about seven, in splendid weather, the first news was, that our stupid ships of war were "out of sight astern." They were not where they should have been, despite a fourteen-hours' start in advance, and express orders "to make the best of their way." So we shall have to run in without escort, and without even having it in our power to return the French salute. Denman is very wroth about it, and we share all his annoyance, which, however, can do neither him nor us any good.

About ten we shall make the port, and I have to get myself into full uniform dress beforehand. Shortly afterwards some further news, my dear child! Farewell a thousand times. Kisses for Mama and the children.

BOULOGNE, *half-past one o'clock.*

DEAR CHILD,—We have arrived safely, as the telegraph will have told you. The Emperor met me on the quay,¹ and brought me here in his carriage to an hotel at the back of the town near the railway station, which he has hired for the occasion, but which looks more like an old French château, only two stories high, with long wings, a paved courtyard and a grillage in front.

The Emperor has been very nervous, if we are to believe what is said by those who stood near him, and who know him well. He was kindly and cordial, does not look so old or pale as his portraits make him, and is much gayer than he is generally represented. The visit cannot fail to be a source of great satisfaction to him. He asked me at once whether I could stay here till the 9th, which is the earliest day he can get the troops together for a grand review? I assured him I must embark again on the evening of the 8th, and

¹ "The Emperor," Lord Cowley wrote, the same day, to Lord Clarendon, "had intended to go on board the yacht, but the Prince was beforehand with him, and stepped on shore as soon as the gangway was established. . . . I thought the Emperor very nervous (the first time I ever saw him so) as we were driving down the quay; and the Duke of Newcastle tells me that the tears stood in His Majesty's eyes while he expressed the pleasure which he received from this fresh proof of the cordiality of the alliance which England proffered him." The Prince was the bearer of an autograph letter to the Emperor from the Queen, by the terms of which he was much gratified.

that this was the latest moment I could give him. You see, a shorter visit would have been a mistake. Drouyn de Lhuys and Marshal Vaillant are the "persons of note" who are here, besides General Montebello, whom we saw at the camp in England, and Colonel Fleury; all the other gentlemen are officers of no distinction.

I have had two long talks with the Emperor, in which he spoke very sensibly about the war and the "*question du jour*." People here are far from sanguine about the results of the expedition to the Crimea, very sensitive about the behaviour of Sir Charles Napier, scantily satisfied with Lord Stratford; nevertheless, so far as the Emperor is concerned, determined to consider the war and our alliance as the one thing paramount, to which all other considerations must give place. To all complaints I have only replied, that to carry public opinion with us in England is the main point (so far as consequences go), and that this is firmly rooted in support of the war; that Sir Charles Napier, Lord Stratford, and Lord Palmerston are the three persons who alone could carry on the war. . . .

Uncle Leopold was here for a couple of days, and left a letter for me; he seems to have preached peace. Pedro [the young King of Portugal] was here yesterday with his brother, and made a very favourable impression. "*Il a tout-à-fait gagné mon cœur*," was the Emperor's expression. He has returned to Ostend, and people here understood that he is to go to England; I therefore conjecture that he will pay you a visit at Osborne. Should this be so, I shall be greatly pleased if you can keep the young people till I return. It would be too sad for me not to see them before they go back to Portugal.¹

About half-past eleven we had a *déjeuner à la fourchette*. The dinner hour is six. About four we are to ride to the camp of a Division, which is pitched on the Dunes near the sea, about five miles from here. About seven a.m. to-morrow we go to St. Omer (thirty-two miles off), where the whole day is to be devoted to a review. I fear this will leave me no time to write to you at any length. The heat is fearful, and my little room has the much-

¹ The King and his brother, the Duke of Oporto, had come to London at the beginning of June, and by their intelligence and fine dispositions had inspired the Prince with a warm attachment for them.

lauded "south aspect," which has the effect of making my fingers stick to the paper.

I forgot to name Lord Cowley, who is here, and makes a useful "go-between." Meyer [*Stallmeister* or Master of the Prince's Stable] is in a state of supreme delight (self-glorification), and yet dissatisfied that I will not put on the saddle-cloth, as here everything is so gorgeous.

Now I conclude for the present, as the Maire is waiting for me.

Half-past seven p.m.—We have only now got back from the camp, after a very fatiguing ride; the hills very steep, the roads detestable. We went to two separate camps, each consisting of an infantry division of 8,000 men. Lord Seaton had a fall from his horse, but did himself no harm. I must make haste with dressing for dinner. Meanwhile the messenger leaves, so I must conclude.

BOULOGNE, 5th Sept. : ten p.m.—Before I go to bed, I must wish you good-night upon paper, even though the wish may be rather late in reaching your dear hands. I have to go out to-morrow morning by six, so that there will be little time for writing. The Emperor thaws more and more. This evening after dinner I withdrew with him to his sitting-room for half an hour before rejoining his guests, in order that he might smoke his cigarette, in which occupation, to his amazement, I could not keep him company. He told me one of the deepest impressions ever made upon him was when, after having gone from France to Rio Janeiro¹ and thence to the United States, he was recalled to Europe by the rumour of his mother's serious illness, he arrived in London shortly after King William's death, and saw you at the age of eighteen going to open Parliament for the first time.

To-day Soliman Pasha has turned up, jovial as ever. We spoke of military caps : he remembered one in the Imperial army in 1813 ; one of the Generals said, "*C'était les bonnets à la Marie Louise.*" "*Ah, j'aime mieux qu'on les appelle à la Napoléon, moi,*" was his rejoinder, with a contemptuous shrug of the shoulders. The Empress's brother-in-law, the Duke of Alba, is here.

¹ After his failure to raise the garrison at Strasburg in revolt against the Government, Louis Napoleon was banished to America.

Queen Victoria to the Earl of Clarendon.¹

BALMORAL, 10th Oct. 1854.—The Queen has received Lord Clarendon's letters of the 8th.² She cannot consider it wise to reject the Austrian proposals *altogether*, although we may usefully amend them. The success in the Crimea ought to be followed up by strengthening the alliance of the European powers, else it may turn out a sterile victory, and the English blood will have flowed in vain ; for supposing even the whole Crimea to fall into our hands, it is not likely that the war will be concluded on that account. How are England and France to bring it to a termination single-handed ? Our Army in the Crimea is the only one we have. . . .

It is true that the Austrian proposal promises little performance on her part, yet the stipulation by Treaty that she will never let the Russians pass the Pruth again is a positive advantage to us ; and the other, that a defensive and offensive alliance with us is to follow the breaking out of the war by Russia against Austria, although being entirely at *our* expense, yet realises the chief condition which will make Austria hesitate less to bring it to a war with Russia. She always (and not without reason) dreaded to have to fight Russia single-handed, and the allied armies in the Crimea could not assist her. What reason could Austria put forward and justify to Prussia and Germany, for going to war at this moment ? To obtain the evacuation of the Principalities was a tangible one, indeed the same *we* put forward when *we* declared war ; but this is now obtained.

We must certainly not allow our policy to be mixed up with the miserable German squabbles, but we must acknowledge that Austria, as a member of the Confederation, is not and cannot be independent of them.

The Queen would accordingly advise a temperate consideration of the Austrian proposals and an amendment of them in those points which seem to require them, and which Lord Clarendon clearly points out in his letter, and the avoidance of anything which could weaken the *accord Européen*.

The Emperor Napoleon's answer to Lord Cowley with reference

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. iii, p. 61.

² In one of which, in reference to Austria's desire for an offensive and defensive treaty with Great Britain, Lord Clarendon had described the Austrian terms as irritating, and the discussion of them a mere waste of time.

to this visit to England renders it probable to the Queen that he was not anxious to have the general invitation changed into a special one, obliging him to come or to refuse. The answer is almost a refusal now, and has not improved our position. The Queen would wish that no anxiety should be shown to obtain the visit, now that it is quite clear to the Emperor that he will be *le bienvenu* at any time. His reception here ought to be a boon to him and not a boon to us.

The Queen fully enters into the feelings of exultation and joy at the glorious victory of the Alma, but this is somewhat damped by the sad loss we have sustained, and the thought of the many bereaved families of all classes who are in mourning for those near and dear to them.

To Colonel Francis Grosvenor Hood, 1st Grenadier Guards.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 17th October 1854.

MY DEAR COLONEL HOOD,—I cannot resist writing you a line to express my admiration of the manner in which the battalion of my regiment under your command bore itself in that desperate fight at the Alma, and my pleasure and satisfaction at the fact, that upon the whole it suffered less in the action than the other battalions of our noble Brigade of Guards. I feel sure that a good deal of this, as well as of the blow you dealt at the enemy, was owing to the judicious manner in which you re-formed your line under the bank of the river before advancing.² I am afraid you have all had to go through a good deal of hardship and privation, and that your labours will not yet be over ; but I trust that the same spirit and courage which have enabled you hitherto to surmount every difficulty, will attend you to the end, and that the Almighty will continue to bless the efforts of our brave army in the East.

Some additional reinforcements are going out immediately to keep your numbers full, but I am sorry to say the recruiting is going on very slowly. The Fusiliers and Coldstreams feel this especially, as they have only one battalion to draw upon for their reinforcements. Believe me always, &c., ALBERT.

¹ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 134.

² The successful operation here referred to is dwelt upon in Kinglake's *Invasion of the Crimea* (vol. iii, p. 220, 6th edition). Colonel Hood was killed in the trenches at Sebastopol before this letter could have reached him.

To the Earl of Aberdeen.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 6th February 1855.

MY DEAR LORD ABERDEEN,—We are just returning to Windsor. Lord Palmerston kissed hands after having announced that his Peelite colleagues also have agreed to keep their offices. The Queen is thus relieved from great anxiety and difficulty, and feels that she owes much to your kind and disinterested assistance. I can quite understand what you say in the letter which I return. You must make allowances also, however, for the wishes of your friends not to be separated from you. You will not be annoyed by further proposals from here.

To-morrow we shall have an opportunity of further conversation with you upon the state of affairs. Believe me always, yours etc.,
ALBERT.

Queen Victoria to the King of Prussia.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 20th February 1855.

DEAREST BROTHER,—I must not let Lord John Russell visit Berlin without personally recommending him to your Majesty—an honour which he deserves in a high degree, as a statesman of wide outlook, well-informed, and moderate. At the same time I may be allowed to repeat my conviction, which I have expressed several times already, that it appears to me impossible to obtain peace so long as Prussia continues indisposed to maintain, in case of necessity by force of arms, the principles publicly expressed in concert with the belligerent Powers and Austria.

Much blood, very much blood, has already been shed. Honour and justice force the belligerent Powers to make every sacrifice in continually defending those principles to the utmost. Whether diplomacy will succeed in saving Prussia from taking an active share in this defence—that remains the secret of the future, which the King of kings alone possesses !

Albert presents his homage to your Majesty, and I beg to be most cordially remembered, and remain as ever, my dear Brother, your Majesty's faithful Servant and Friend.—VICTORIA R.

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. iii, p. 127.

² *Ibid.*, p. 135.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 23rd Feb. 1855.—Things have gone mad here, the political world is quite crazy, and the Court is the only institution which does not lose its tranquil bearing. Nevertheless, the people will soon come to their senses again. The press, which for its own ends exaggerates the sufferings of our troops in the Crimea, has made the nation quite furious. It is bent upon punishing all and sundry, and cannot find the right person, because he does not exist.

Memorandum.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 8th March 1855.—The Duke of Newcastle told me yesterday evening that Mr. Roebuck had been with him, and had asked him, whether he had any objection to being examined? The Duke replied, that he had the strongest on public grounds, thinking it most dangerous and injurious to the public service, but this question seemed to have been disposed of between the Government and the House of Commons; on private grounds he was most anxious to be examined. Mr. Roebuck, after further conversation, told him that the conviction upon the minds of the Committee was daily gaining strength, that they would be able to discover very little here;—that the key to many mysteries could only be found at the head-quarters, and that in a high quarter there had been a determination that the expedition should not succeed, which had been suggested to the head-quarters. The Duke said, “Now I must be careful how I talk further with you, as I see you are laying the ground for an impeachment, as you can only mean me by a *high quarter*.” “Oh no!” answered Mr. Roebuck, “I mean a much higher personage than you; I mean Prince Albert.”

The Duke was amazed, and did not know whether he was to be more astounded at the wickedness or the folly of such a belief. He told Mr. Roebuck that he had a press full of letters from me in the very room where they met, and was almost tempted to show him some of them, as they gave conclusive evidence of my intense anxiety for the success of the expedition; and he continued, “If during the time of my official duties I have received any suggestions which were more valuable to me than others, they did not come from your friends the Napiers, but from Prince Albert.”

¹ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 213.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 219–21, and footnote, p. 222.

Mr. Roebuck said he was very much astonished at what the Duke said, and that it had not been his belief only.

The Duke proceeded further to reason with him, and, amongst other grounds to show him the stupidity of such a belief, he referred to the fact of the Queen's and my entire union in public matters, of the influence my advice naturally had with the Queen, of the Queen's having suffered materially in health from anxiety about her troops ; and yet it was to be supposed that all this time I had been working behind her back to produce that misery to myself ! Mr. Roebuck said they knew about the Queen's anxiety, as, when Lord Cardigan had been at Windsor, he had had the Royal children upon his knees, and they said, " You must hurry back to Sebastopol, and take it, else it will kill Mama !!! " Can such stupidity be credited ?

Mr. Roebuck lamented the appointment of Lord Raglan, who was unfit to command in the field, and whose services at home would have been most valuable, and attributed his appointment to my wish to get rid of him, in order to keep Lord Hardinge quite alone, with whom I could do what I pleased !! The Duke told him *he* had selected Lord Raglan, and conferred with Lord Hardinge upon it long before either the Queen or myself had been made acquainted with the fact, and suggested, How was it for me afterwards to bring about the ruin of the army through the very man who must have considered himself injured by me ?

The Duke asked me whether he could do or say anything that I might wish ? I replied that I did not see what could be said or done. We could not make people either virtuous or wise, and must only regret the monstrous degree to which their aberration extended. I must rest mainly upon a good conscience, and the belief that, during the fifteen years of my connection with this country, I had not given a human soul the means of imputing to me the want of sincerity or patriotism. I myself had the conviction that the Queen and myself were perhaps the only two persons in the kingdom who had no other interest, thought, or desire than the good, the honour, and the power of the country ; and this not unnaturally, as no *private* interest can be thought of which could interfere with these considerations.

I thought it right to keep this record of what the Duke told me, as a proof that the *will* at least to injure me is never wanting

in certain circles, and that the gullibility of the public has no bounds.¹

*To Baron von Stockmar.*²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 8th May 1855.—I will send after you only one word, of the dismay occasioned by your sudden disappearance. There was an outcry through all the house from great and small, young and old ! “The Baron is gone !” Then, however, came variations upon it. “I wanted to say this and this to him.” “He promised he would stay longer.” “I went to his room, and found it empty.” “I would have travelled with him.” “He promised to carry a letter to my father.” “*J'ai encore commencé un travail qu'il me demandait.*”

You can divine who the persons were by what they exclaimed, without my naming them ; but not the feelings of regret which overwhelmed all at having lost you from among us !

I hope you have not suffered on your journey from the abominable weather. I have been seized with fresh cold in the head, and am overwhelmed with business—yourself, Briegleb, Becker, and Grey, having all deserted me within two days, and left me here alone with Phipps, to wrestle with the deluge as best I may.

¹ It may be convenient here once for all to dispose of perhaps the only calumny, of the many to which the Prince was subjected, which, so far as we are aware, keeps any hold upon the public mind, viz. that he had amassed large sums of money out of the income allowed him by the nation, part of which had been invested in the purchase of land at South Kensington, adjoining the property of the Exhibition Commissioners. The Prince never purchased any land at South Kensington either for himself or his family. Connected as he was with the acquisition of ground there for purely national purposes, the thought of acquiring property in the same locality for personal purposes would never have entered his mind, or the mind indeed of any honourable man. But, in truth, the Prince never had the means to make purchases of this nature. His whole income was no more than sufficient to meet the salaries of his secretaries and other officials and servants, his public subscriptions, and such purchases of works of art as were expected from him. He was often blamed, because these purchases were not on a larger scale. The fault was not with him, but in the very limited means at his disposal, and as to these his only regret was, that they did not enable him to do for art and science all that he would have wished. It was only by strict economy that the year's current expenditure was made to square with the year's income, and the Prince died, *leaving absolutely no fortune* ; indeed, barely enough to meet his personal liabilities. And yet even recently we were assured, upon the authority of an eminent statesman, who survived the Prince many years, and who professed to speak from personal knowledge, that he left behind in one of his investments no less a sum than £600,000 ! The statesman in question was not always exact in his statements, and he was never less exact, or more inexcusably so, than in this instance. But if a man, whose position gave weight to his words, could propagate so mere a fable, it becomes necessary to give it, and all stories of the same kind, an emphatic denial.

² See Martin, vol. iii, p. 273

I have completed my Memorandum upon the Peace question, and sent one copy to the Cabinet, and another (with the consent of the Cabinet) to the Emperor. Your ideas have been developed in it. I would I could have submitted it to yourself first ! As a courier is going to Brussels, I must send you a line by him.

To Prince William of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 31st May 1855.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I am only answering your friendly letter of the 16th to-day. The Grenadier cap has come safely into my hands, and I thought I should be following your wishes if I kept it back until Arthur's birthday, when it will form the principal decoration of the present table, and enhance the " dear God-Papa " immeasurably in the little boy's estimation.

I sympathised with you on the death of the Emperor Nicholas,¹ and realised the regrets you must be feeling. But it must be a real relief to you to have had so recently an opportunity of explaining to him your views on the difficult question of the moment, which differed so vitally from his, and to show him that differences of opinion on political questions need not imply a diminution of personal friendship, and that a political opponent may in fact be a truer friend than one who encourages one to start on a wicked and hazardous course. Yet these are the most difficult tasks in human life, and they fall all too often on princes. The solution of them demands strength of character and clearness of vision.

If these qualities had prevailed in Berlin there would have been no war ; if they prevailed there even now a return to peace would be assured. The attitude adopted by Europe towards France in 1840, when she threatened the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire by taking sides with Mohammed Ali, was the model on which the Eastern Question of the present day ought to be and could be settled, and the circumstance that Louis Philippe was not a legitimate sovereign and his country was under a Constitution, whilst Nicholas ruled absolutely and combated revolution everywhere, could make no rational difference to the conception of the Eastern Question and of the duty of Europe.

I still see little chance of peace yet, and you are right in thinking

¹ The Emperor Nicholas I died on 2nd March, and was succeeded by Alexander II.

the third Point¹ of the Peace conditions the most dangerous. Its effect is that for her honour's sake Russia cannot reduce her fleet. How can we carry out the clause "*de mettre fin à la prépondérance de la Russie dans la Mer Noire*"? This has been recognised by all parties (including Russia) to be essential in view of European peace. How can it be carried out, if Russia insists on retaining both her fleet and the sovereign right of maintaining as large a fleet as she chooses? The idea that England and France must be burdened for all time with maintaining in the Black Sea, far from their bases, a fleet equal in strength to that of Russia simply for the purpose of watching the Russian fleet, would be monstrous, and would force the latter into perpetual preparedness for war; she would prefer actual war to that. Russia could easily keep 20 ships of the line lying in Sebastopol harbour without its costing her a penny, whereas England and France would have, by treaty, to keep 20 ships constantly cruising round the Black Sea (in peace time we never keep more than 5 in England!). Or is it suggested that we, having drawn the sword to preserve Turkey's integrity, should take possession of bits of her territory in order to build British and French naval bases and fortresses in the interior of the countries and in her best cities? And would three Sebastopols, with armed fleets and garrisons threatening each other, be a guarantee for European peace and tranquillity? Could the Porte stand these fleets constantly sailing past the Seraglio, and if she refused to allow it, how could the British and French maintain their fleets in the Black Sea?

These are questions which cannot possibly be answered by "yes." Austria and Germany may hope to reap the entire fruits of our bloody war, for the Danube belongs to them, and they will get the vast trade with the East through the Black Sea, for when the

¹ The Four Points were: (1) Russian Protectorate over the Principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Servia to cease; the privileges granted by the Sultan to these provinces to be placed under a collective guarantee of the Powers. (2) Navigation of the Danube at its mouths to be freed from all obstacle, and submitted to the application of the principles established by the Congress of Vienna. (3) The Treaty of the 13th July, 1841, to be revised in concert by all the high contracting parties in the interest of the balance of power in Europe, and so as to put an end to the preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea. (4) Russia to give up her claim to an official protectorate over the subjects of the Sublime Porte, to whatever religion they belong; and France, Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia to assist mutually in obtaining from the Ottoman Government the confirmation and the observance of the religious privileges of the different Christian communities, and to turn to account, in the common interests of their co-religionists, the generous intentions manifested by the Sultan, at the same time avoiding any aggression on his dignity and the independence of his Crown.

Black Sea is free, that trade will be no longer controlled by Russia. But, will trade recover, and will Germany's independence be assured when a few warships at the mouth of the Danube can at any moment put an end to them ?

I incline to the philanthropic view that the happiest solution for all parties would be for the Black Sea to be declared " neutral " (as there are a neutral Switzerland and a neutral Belgium), and that it should be prohibited to the warships of all nations—Russia, Turkey and the Western Powers. Then there might be true well-being and true civilisation throughout the East, and Russia herself would greatly benefit by the blessings it would bring her.

Enough of this, however, for we are not sitting at the Conference, and you, as a Prussian, ought not to be interested. If the war goes on, it will be impossible much longer to keep up its present character of being waged solely for the welfare of Europe. The war cannot be maintained without enormous sacrifices on the part of the Western Powers, and one of the risks—by no means the least—is that they may say to Germany with a sneer, " You didn't get much by it in the end ! "

On the 16th we expect a visit from the French Emperor and Empress, an *événement* in history ! I shall have to have precautions taken in the Crypt of St. George's Chapel, to see that George III does not turn in his grave !

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 28th June 1855.—. . . The miscarriage of the attack [at Sebastopol] on the 18th was a sad affair ! Now the cholera has made its appearance again as enemy. General Estcourt, Admiral Boxer, and many others of our best people have died of it. The malady has been especially severe on the Sardinians. The Russians are suffering fearfully, as was only to be expected. We are much bothered by the nerves of our Imperial neighbour, who is continually sending telegraphic orders, to which, it is true, Péliſſier does not pay much heed, but he thereby places himself in a very perilous position, especially as the other Generals are allowed to send home reports about him. This is a terrible mistake. Persigny, who goes to Paris to-day to fetch his wife, has promised

¹ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 300.

me to represent the danger to his master. This M. Persigny proves himself a quite straightforward, honourable, and well-meaning man, madly imprudent and naïve, and often very droll. To Lord Clarendon he will say, when they meet in conference : “*Ce pauvre Walewski m'a écrit une dépêche. Voulez-vous que je vous la lise ?*” “*S'il vous plaît.*” “*Ah, je l'ai laissée à la maison, mais n'importe : elle ne vaut pas la peine !*” He is very fond of philosophising, and I have had many discussions with him, which, as I could not always coincide with his views, have ended in his taking me to his heart.

Uncle Leopold comes on Tuesday with Philippe and Charlotte ; and by the end of the week we purpose to get away from the thoroughly used-up air of London. The political folly and levity of parties and the press, amidst the terrible mass of business, makes one's head reel.

To Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

OSBORNE, 14th Aug. 1855.—I will just say one word which will interest you about the Foreign Legion. We saw 3,408 under arms at Shorncliffe, and were very much pleased with their bearing and spirit. The British uniform went oddly with the German countenance, but it was decidedly better made than formerly. The Germans form a complete Jäger battalion under Colonel Schrör, and two still incomplete infantry battalions under Major Aller and Colonel Woolridge. Colonel Sulzberger commands the Swiss battalion, Colonel von Stutterheim commands the German Legion. The whole organisation is under Colonel Rimloch.

To King Leopold of the Belgians.¹

OSBORNE, 29th August 1855.

MY DEAR UNCLE,—We cannot be sufficiently thankful for the success which has attended our expedition to Paris. One day later, and we should not have been able to reach Boulogne, and during a heavy gale that lasted for three days hosts of vessels had to run for it to the Downs. In Paris we had the most glorious weather, no accident of any kind occurred, none of the festivities miscarried, no man's feelings were wounded (as on occasions of this kind, where so many personal vanities are brought into play, so generally happens), the public was inspired by a daily growing enthusiasm, and on good

¹ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 352.

terms with us, and with itself, the troops were superb, the festivities fine and on a grand scale, the Emperor and Empress cordial and friendly, our own suite thoroughly pleased, the children well-behaved, and at the same time highly delighted. In short, everything went off to a wish, which is always a great chance where what had to be done demanded such difficult combinations, as were required here. That the results of the visit will be most beneficial politically, I cannot for a moment doubt.

Paris is signally beautified by the Rue de Rivoli, the Boulevard de Strasbourg, the completion of the Louvre, the great open square in front of the Hôtel de Ville, the clearing away of all the small houses which surrounded Notre Dame, by the fine Napoleon barracks, the completion of the Palais de Justice, and restoration of the Sainte Chapelle, and especially by the laying out of the ornamental grounds in the Bois de Boulogne, which really may be said to vie with the finest English parks. How all this could have been done in so short a time no one comprehends. On the other hand, a painful impression was produced by Neuilly laid in ruins, with grass growing over them, and by the chapel of St. Ferdinand, with the beautiful monument to the Duke of Orleans. Both of these spots we visited with the Emperor. Strange ! No less remarkable than that, after the great review, we went down in our uniforms, by torchlight (for it was now dark) with him and Prince Napoleon into the tomb of Napoleon, while the organ of the Church of the Invalides played " God Save the Queen " ; and that 40,000 men defiled before us upon the beach at Boulogne, the spot from which Napoleon was to start his invading army, and that whilst our fleet saluted us from the very anchorage which Nelson traversed for the purpose of preventing the invasion, many of the French regimental bands played " Rule Britannia ! " in reply. So numerous were the strange impressions wrought by the contrast of past with present, that one could often only wonder. Thus we supped at Versailles in the theatre where the *gardes du corps* held their famous banquet, and even sat in the box in which Marie Antoinette showed herself to them ; Victoria made her toilette in her boudoir, the ball-room was decorated after Louis XV's last ball, &c., &c.

Little was said about politics, beyond the strongest assurances of persevering loyalty in the war, until it shall be brought to a satisfactory close. The French are now within 60 yards of the Malakoff,

and we within 120 of the Redan ; the new Russian army was beaten in the field on the 16th, and must have lost 15,000 men on the occasion, for 3,200 dead were buried during the truce. The Russian cavalry must be at its last gasp for want of fodder, and the garrison of Sebastopol crippled by the numbers of sick and wounded. God send a happy issue to it all !! and that would soon come, had we one General-in-Chief.

To the Duchess of Kent.¹

OSBORNE, 29th Aug. 1855.—I shall say little about Paris, as I want to keep your curiosity alive for all that will have to be told you by word of mouth. You can then ask, too, about the points most interesting to yourself. The whole journey has been a perfect success and has been unmistakably watched over and favoured by heaven ; and there is not the smallest circumstance I can think of which I would have wished otherwise. Victoria bore the great fatigues remarkably well, and won the hearts of all by her endeavours to make herself agreeable to the people. I am bound to praise the children greatly. They behaved extremely well, and pleased everybody. The task was no easy one for them, but they discharged it without embarrassment, and with natural simplicity.

We intend now to leave Osborne on the 5th and arrive at Balmoral on the 7th.

We shall probably have Fritz of Prussia visiting us there for a few days. He has been taking the baths at Ostend, and will come to England. He wishes to see Scotland.

We found the red-cheeked children whom we left behind much advanced, though Alice is still very delicate and nervous.

I have found the black shawl, and purpose laying it at your feet at Abergeldie—but not in the mud, as Sir Walter Raleigh did his cloak.

To Baron von Stockmar.²

BALMORAL, 13th Sept. 1855.—I must write you a line, as I cannot pay you a visit in your room, to share my joy with you over the fall of Sebastopol. Our bonfire on Craig Gowan, opposite the house, the setting up of which you will remember when the false news of the untraceable Tatar arrived, and which to our sorrow we had to leave behind us when we left Balmoral last year—which was, more-

¹ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 356.

² *Ibid.*, p. 360.

over, blown down by the gale on the 5th November, Inkermann day, and found by us on our return this year scattered on the ground in melancholy plight—blazed out magnificently about eleven o'clock on the evening of the 10th. It illuminated all the peaks round about ; and the whole scattered population of the valleys understood the sign, and made for the mountain, where we performed towards midnight a veritable Witches' dance, supported by whisky.

The result of all these unspeakable exertions and sufferings is truly gratifying in the highest sense. We are still quite without details, further than that the assault upon the 8th cost us alone 2,000 men : we may set down the loss of the French at double that number, because they delivered the assault at three points, and were only able to take the Malakoff. The Russians must have sustained fearful losses, as to which, however, they will probably say nothing. The result has proved that those people were quite right who maintained that the Malakoff was the key of the position. Nevertheless from September of last year till the end of February, the French besieged the west side merely, and our troops upon the right did not extend so as to overlap the Malakoff. The siege upon the right dates, therefore, from the beginning of March ; but it was the end of May before the French, under Pélissier, undertook to assault the Mamelon and the outworks. Since that time the engineers' work has made constant and rapid progress, and had advanced to within ten paces of the Malakoff. (The attack of the 18th June was a blundering episode prematurely accelerated by the success of the 7th.) Every twenty-four hours cost the French, however, 200 men and us close upon 60 ! This being the case, whatever the loss may have been in the assault, the result to us is a great saving of life, when we take into account how much we gain upon the whole by the fact of the entire army being now set free. Every twenty-four hours' cannonade cost the Russians 1,000 men, because they were necessarily so closely packed together. A further fact ascertained is, that the vertical fire of bombs from mortars, which were thought to have been superseded by the invention of Paixhans and horizontal bombs, is nevertheless indispensable. The French, as well as ourselves, have since June brought a number into line, while the Russians had very few ; and, over and above this, we had 11 guns, of which the smallest calibre was thirty-two pounds, and the largest eighty-six pounds, in position, and the French about 200

We had 89 mortars (of which the greatest number were thirteen inches diameter) and the French 120. It is not easy to estimate the guns of the Russians, but they could not have been less than 800. At the last they must have run quite out of ammunition, since we destroyed their foundries.

Poor Seymour¹ has been wounded for the second time by a fragment of a grenade at the back of the head ; still, it is only a flesh wound, and he will get over it. What the Generals will do now, we cannot tell. I hope they will not rest till they have driven the Russians fairly out of the Crimea. I imagine they will not retain the north side long, for they would have quite the same difficulty on the north side in finding supplies as they had in provisioning the garrison of the city, without any compensation for their pains beyond that of being able to contemplate the lost city and the shattered fleet. I would embark 80,000 men with all possible despatch, and march from Eupatoria upon the Strait of Perekop or Simferopol, and so either capture the whole disorganised army, or force it to a disastrous retreat. The Russian army is frightfully demoralised.

Except the first *corps d'armée*, and the Guards, and perhaps the half of the Grenadiers, all the *corps d'armée* are in the Crimea. Thirteen divisions of infantry, 6 battalions of reserve, 8 ditto rifles, 30,000 men, sailors, and marines, 52 batteries of foot artillery, 8 batteries of horse artillery, with 64 guns, and 22,000 cavalry (including Cossacks), have at different times been sent in ; and, counting in 10,000 militia, the strength of the Russian army in the Crimea at the present time scarcely comes up to 130,000, and these not in the best condition ! Our forces are 110,000 French, 35,000 English, 12,000 Sardinians, 54,000 Turks. What we want is a united command.

Politics on the Continent are now likely to incline more decidedly towards the Western Powers, and Austria should have every reason to feel a marked increase in her courage. I have read Diezel's last pamphlet on the formation of a National Party in Germany with the greatest interest. It contains so much that is true, and is written with so much clearness and moderation, and at the same time with so much spirit, that it cannot fail to produce a decided effect.

Prince Fritz William comes here to-morrow evening. I have received a very friendly letter from the Princess of Prussia.

¹ General Sir Francis Seymour, who had accompanied the Prince in his tour in Italy in 1839 (see p. 20).

To the Same.¹

BALMORAL, 20th Sept. 1855.—Now for the “*bonne bouche!*” The event² you are interested in reached an active stage this morning after breakfast. The young man laid his proposal before us with the permission of his parents, and of the King; we accepted it for ourselves, but requested him to hold it in suspense as regards the other party till after her Confirmation. Till then all the simple unconstraint of girlhood is to continue undisturbed. In the Spring the young man wishes to make his offer to herself, and possibly to come to us along with his parents and his engaged sister. The seventeenth birthday is to have elapsed before the actual marriage is thought of, and this will therefore not come off till the following Spring.

The secret is to be kept *tant bien que mal*, the parents and the King being informed of the true state of the case forthwith—namely, that we, the parents and the young man, are under a pledge, so far as such pledge is possible, and that the young lady herself is to be asked after her Confirmation. In the meantime there will be much to discuss; and I would entreat of you to come to us soon, that we may talk over matters face to face, and hear what you have to advise. The young gentleman is to leave us again on the 28th. In this matter he placed himself at our disposal; and I suggested a fortnight as not too long and not too short for a visit of the kind. I have been much pleased with him. His most prominent qualities are great straightforwardness, frankness, and honesty. He appears to be free from prejudices, and pre-eminently well-intentioned; he speaks of himself as personally greatly attracted by Vicky. I do not expect she will have any objection to make.

To the Earl of Clarendon.³

BALMORAL, 21st September 1855.

MY DEAR LORD CLARENDON,—The Queen wishes me to send you the enclosed letters, with the request that they may be sent by messengers to Coblenz.⁴

¹ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 370.

² The engagement of Prince Frederick William of Prussia and the Princess Royal.

³ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. iii, p. 186.

⁴ Where Prince and Princess William of Prussia then were.



H.R.H. Prince Frederick William of Prussia, 1854
Afterwards the Emperor Frederick
From the picture by Faija, after Winterhalter

I may tell you in the strictest confidence that Prince Frederic William has yesterday laid before us his wish for an alliance with the Princess Royal with the full concurrence of his parents, as well as of the King of Prussia. We have accepted his proposal as far as we are personally concerned, but have asked that the child should not be made acquainted with it until after her Confirmation, which is to take place next Spring, when he might make it to her himself, and receive from her own lips the answer which is only valuable when flowing from those of the person chiefly concerned. A marriage would not be possible before the completion of the Princess's seventeenth year, which is in two years from this time. The Queen empowers me to say that you may communicate this event to Lord Palmerston, but we beg that under present circumstances it may be kept a strict secret. What the world may say we cannot help. Ever yours, etc., ALBERT.

To Prince William of Prussia.

BALMORAL, 21st September 1855.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—After the letter, which you will have received yesterday from your son, you will naturally expect me to follow it up to-day and express what you and the dear cousin must be awaiting from Victoria and myself : that the idea of uniting our children, and thereby drawing closer the bonds of our friendship is a most pleasant one. Fritz will have told you that we give our consent with much joy and full confidence, but that we do not wish that before her Confirmation, which is to take place next Easter, her childish simplicity and innocence should be disturbed by a proposal. This you will understand as quite natural, and in your own daughter's case (I think) you held a similar opinion. I will not answer for it that the clever child may not have noticed that something is in the wind ; but I can say that I know that Fritz is not displeasing to her.

It may be difficult perhaps to preserve the secrecy which will be necessary for some time to come, and we have to be content with a *secret de la comédie*, which is sometimes a name for official secrecy. This is why Victoria is not writing to the King. But we beg you not to let him be ignorant that we acknowledge and appreciate highly his having given Fritz leave to come here and make the important proposal, and regard it as a new proof of his personal friendship (specially in these troubled times). The marriage can

hardly take place before her 17th birthday, which will condemn Fritz to waiting for rather over two years. But a solid foundation of health is so essential a condition for really happy married life (if one is to present a bold face to the storms of a hostile world) and for a strong and healthy family, that I hope Fritz will be ready to make the sacrifice of waiting.

About Vicky I say nothing and must let the match-maker speak ! I had written a long letter about Fritz to the dear cousin, who was so kind as to write me a most friendly and confidential letter. Please tell her that I destroyed it yesterday as being no longer appropriate to the circumstances. Victoria is writing to-day, and whilst I must be her interpreter with you, I beg that Victoria's letter to the cousin may be regarded as representing my feelings also.

May the Almighty pour His blessings on the design we all have at heart, and grant to your dear son all the family happiness which he appears to merit so abundantly.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

BALMORAL, 29th Sept. 1855.—If I have not written to you for a week, this has arisen from my not being able to hold a pen, and even now I shall only be able to manage it but indifferently. I have had a regular attack of rheumatism in my right shoulder, with spasms in the right arm, which made it all but impossible for me to move, and, worse than all, caused me nights of sleeplessness and pain. Now I am better again, though still “a cripple.”

Victoria is greatly thrilled—still all goes smoothly and prudently. The Prince is really in love, and the little lady does her best to please him. . . . The day after to-morrow the young gentleman takes his departure. We have to-day received the answers from Coblenz, where they are in raptures ; the communication has been made to the King at Stolzenfels, and has been hailed by him with cordial satisfaction. They are quite at one with us as to the postponement of the betrothal till after the Confirmation, and of the marriage till after the seventeenth birthday.

Lord Clarendon sends warm congratulations on the alliance, and has heard the highest encomiums on the young man. Lord Palmerston says, “He trusts that the event, when it takes place, will contribute as much to the happiness of those more immediately con-

¹ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 371.

cerned, and to the comfort of Your Majesty and the Royal family, as it undoubtedly will to the interests of the two countries and of Europe in general." Now, however, you must come to us, for we have very much to talk over.

To the Same.¹

BALMORAL, 2nd Oct. 1855.—Prince Fritz William left us yesterday. Vicky has indeed behaved *quite admirably*, as well during the closer explanation on Saturday, as in the self-command which she displayed subsequently and at the parting. She manifested towards Fritz and ourselves the most child-like simplicity and candour, and the best feeling. The young people are ardently in love with one another, and the purity, innocence, and unselfishness of the young man have been on his part equally touching. . . . Abundance of tears were shed. While deep visible revolutions in the emotional natures of the two young people and of the mother were taking place, by which they were powerfully agitated, my feeling was rather one of cheerful satisfaction and gratitude to God, for bringing across our path so much that was noble and good, where it may, nay must, conduce to the happiness for life of those whom He has endowed with those qualities, and who are in themselves so dear to me.

The real object of my writing to you now is to enclose Vicky's letter to you, which goes with this, and in which the child gives vent to her own feelings. Let me once more adjure you to come to us soon. We have so much to talk over.

At Sebastopol our Generals appear to be suffering from a remarkable lack of brains. There are good builders there, at any rate, for our people are unable to make a breach anywhere. . . .

I am tortured and tormented with rheumatism, and can scarcely hold the pen.

To the Same.²

BALMORAL, 7th October 1855.

DEAR STOCKMAR,—Your long letter reached me safely two days ago. Since then you will have received so much news from here that there is no longer occasion to answer much of what you say in it. Still, I am anxious to omit nothing that is essential to your full knowledge of the affair. . . . The present position of the business

¹ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 373.

² *Ibid.*, p. 374.

is this. The son's offer, and our acceptance, in so far as we ourselves are concerned, has been communicated to the parents in writing, and in my letter to the Prince's father I requested him to inform the uncle [the King], in our name, how thoroughly we regard his support of his nephew's proposal as a proof of his friendship, and to say that our sole reason for not writing to himself is, that we wish the offer to the Princess herself postponed till after the Confirmation. What has taken place since has certainly altered the position of matters at home, still we see much political and personal convenience in adhering, as far as others are concerned, to the position which was originally taken up. . . . For any public declaration of betrothal we are at present quite unprepared. We have not yet had an opportunity of speaking with any of our Ministers. We must deal circumspectly towards France.

*The Times*¹ has fired off an article (on the 3rd) that is at once truly *scandalous* in itself and *degrading* to the country, with a view to provoke hostile public opinion, but happily it has excited universal disgust by its extravagance and discourtesy. Victoria has written to our Ally, and expressed to him our hopes for Vicky's future as a proof of personal confidence, and I doubt not he will acknowledge it as such. A sense of decorum demands that the affair should not be *publicly* discussed before the Confirmation. In the meantime we shall have leisure to arrange whatever is right. Your good counsel at *our elbow* is indispensably necessary for us, so come to us as soon as your health will let you. The secret, as you say, will be no secret, but no one will have any right to talk of the affair publicly. The Royal family here know what everyone knows—viz. that a preliminary offer has been made, and that it is to be renewed after Easter.

To the Same.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 29th Oct. 1855.—There has been a terrible pause in our correspondence, occasioned partly by our changing our

¹ The article spoke of Prussia as a "wretched German dynasty," which "would not survive the collapse of Russia's influence." The future husband of the Princess Royal had been ordered to enter the Russian service, and to spend "this year, which holds out now such flattering prospects for a Crown, ignominiously as an officer-in-waiting at the Levee of his Imperial master. He will lose the privileges of his birth, which are not granted in Russia to any German." The English people must be prepared to see their princess learning to be anti-English, and in a not distant future returning home as a banished refugee.

² See Martin, vol. iii, p. 384. The French Emperor had announced his intention of withdrawing 100,000 men from the Crimea. It was feared that this would strengthen Russia's hands when peace came to be made.

quarters to Windsor, partly, however, by your letter of the 6th, which points at another in continuation of it to follow immediately. Up to this moment it has not made its appearance ; but I cannot wait longer. We are all well. We miss the fine mountains and the pure air of Balmoral, but are on the other hand indemnified for these by a superabundance of business.

I have worked out a plan for the Reorganisation of our Army in the Crimea, and its division into two *Corps-d'armée*, under one chief, which has been adopted by the Ministry, and will, I hope, bear good fruits. Sir W. Codrington becomes Commander-in-Chief, Sir Colin Campbell and Sir W. Eyre take the Divisions, General Wyndham becomes Chief of the General Staff, Generals Simpson, Bentinck, Markham, and Airy return.

I have just completed a Memorandum on Examinations and New Rules of Admission for the Diplomatic Body, a question which has been stirred by the Administrative Reform agitation, and am now engaged in preparing an address on the influence of Science and Art on our Manufactures, which I am to deliver at the laying of the foundation stone of the Birmingham and Midland Counties Institute.

Our Cabinet has sustained a loss in Sir William Molesworth, as to whose successor no decision has yet been made. Lord Elgin is likely to come into the Cabinet in Lord Canning's place. There are people who maintain that young Lord Stanley (Lord Derby's son) is to be had. This would not be more remarkable than the prevailing belief that the Peelites have come to an understanding with Disraeli, and will, along with Cobden and Bright, and perhaps John Russell, form a Peace party.

Up to this time the peace feeling has been stronger in France than here, and gives us much to do. This justifies the apprehension you have long entertained. What is said is : " *Si la France doit continuer la guerre à grands sacrifices, il lui faut des objets plus nationaux, plus Français* : Poland, Italy, the left bank of the Rhine, &c.¹" For this we are prepared, and for these purposes might recall our army from the Black Sea by degrees." Herein lies one of the causes of

¹ The folly of the last of these projects, so steadily fomented through a long series of years by M. Thiers and others—a folly to be afterwards so bitterly expiated—needed no demonstration. On the 11th April, 1855, in a letter from the Queen to Lord Clarendon, these prophetic words occur : " *The first Frenchman who should hostilely approach the Rhine would set the whole of Germany on fire.*"

our inactivity in the Crimea ! The position taken up by Austria and Prussia is alone to blame for all, and I tremble for the Nemesis !

In the matrimonial affair, nothing new has transpired. I am giving Vicky every evening an hour for conversation, in which our chief topic is history. She knows a great deal. I also give her subjects, which she works out for me. Her intellect is quick and thoroughly sound in its operations.

As you speak to me in your letter of the value of *the right time* in human measures, a theme on which you often discourse, it may perhaps interest you to know how completely Napoleon agrees with you in one of his letters to his brother Joseph. I transcribe the passage : “*Ce sont là les opérations de la paix ; tout cela doit venir avec elle, et cette paix arrivera. Le moyen de faire entendre à des hommes de l'imagination de M. Roederer QUE LE TEMPS EST LE GRAND ART DE L'HOMME,—que ce qui ne doit être fait qu'en 1810 ne peut être fait en 1807 ! La fibre Gauloise ne se plie pas au calcul du temps. C'est cependant par cette seule considération que j'ai réussi dans tout ce que j'ai fait.*”

Now I will conclude with my *ceterum censeo*, “that you are to come to us.” You are most longingly looked for.

To Prince Frederick William of Prussia.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 6th November 1855.

MY DEAR FRITZ,—Accept my best thanks for your friendly lines of the 22nd October.

The state of Prussia, as you describe it, is most critical, and designs such as those contemplated by the reactionists, prosecuted by such means as are at this moment practised in regard to the elections, may result in extreme danger to the monarchy. For if the world be overruled by a God, as I believe it is, vile and wicked actions must bear evil fruits, which frequently do not show themselves at once, but long years afterwards, as the Bible tells us in the words, “the sins of the fathers are visited on the children to the third and fourth generation.” This being so, I ask myself, what are the duties of those who are to come after in reference to the sowing of such dragon’s teeth ? And I am constrained to answer to myself, that they are enjoined by morality, conscience, and patriotism, not

¹ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 386.

to stand aloof as indifferent spectators of the destruction of a Constitution that has been sworn to. And when I consider what I should do in the present state of things, this much is quite clear to me, that I would record a solemn protest against such proceedings, not by way of opposition to the Government, but in defence of the rights of those, whose rights I should regard as inseparable from my own—those of my country and my people—and in order that I might absolve my conscience from any suspicion of participation in the unholy work. At the same time, however, that my conduct might be divested of every semblance of being dictated by a spirit of opposition or desire for popularity,—and in order, it may be, to make the step itself unnecessary—I should in all confidence make those who are contemplating the wrong aware, that, if it were persisted in, I should feel myself compelled to adopt this course. This done, I should entertain no animosity towards my friends, but, on the contrary, should live on upon terms of peace with the reigning powers.

I am satisfied, that an attitude of this kind would inspire the delinquents with a certain measure of alarm, and help to keep the nation from losing all hope, and there is no such solid basis for patience as hope.

In your letter to Victoria of the 3rd, which she received yesterday, you speak of your new labours and studies in the different Ministerial departments. When you have worked in them for some time, the truth will become obvious to you of Axel Oxenstiern's saying, "My son, you will be surprised, with how little wisdom the world is governed." I am only afraid, that it will be nobody's interest to explain essential principles to you, and that, on the contrary, they will try, perhaps not unintentionally, to overwhelm you with the multiplicity of details and of so-called work. But this good must at any rate ensue, that you will become thoroughly acquainted with what is making history. Most German bureaucrats cannot, and even will not, see the wood for the trees ; they even regard the abstract idea of the wood as something dangerous, and measure its value by the density with which the trees are huddled together, not by the vigour of their growth. Added to which, the weight and number of German official documents is something appalling.

In another way Vicky also is very busy : she has learned much in many directions. . . . She now comes to me every evening from

six to seven, when I put her through a kind of general catechising, and in order to give precision to her ideas, I make her work out certain subjects by herself, and bring me the results to be revised. Thus she is now engaged in writing a short Compendium of Roman History. . . .

Of late we have had rains without intermission, which have made us apprehensive of floods. Prices of all kinds are still frightful, but still there is nothing like poverty in the country, and the wages of labour are so high, that recruiting does not go on so well as we could wish.

From the Crimea we have excellent news, so far as the condition of the troops and the preparations for the winter are concerned, but not as to any vigorous effort to drive the Russians from the Crimea. Our army will by the spring number on the spot 50,000 men, which, with the Turkish contingent of 20,000 men under General Vivian, and 15,000 Sardinians, exclusive of French and Turks, will form a very imposing force.

Now, however, I will indeed "let you go," as they say in Vienna.

To Lord Clarendon, Foreign Secretary.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 17th January 1856.

MY DEAR LORD CLARENDON,—The King of Prussia's ways are unfathomable!

The Queen received last night the enclosed peace-pregnant (*Friedensschwanger*) telegraph! Although the King begs his name may remain concealed, the Queen thinks that it ought not to be so, from *you* at least, begging you not to divulge it further than the whole line of the telegraph may have done. If Russia has accepted the whole Ultimatum, as he pretends to know for certain, we have done wisely not to be in too great a hurry. The Queen wishes the telegraphic curiosity to be returned to her.

To Baron von Stockmar.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 24th Jan. 1856.—Russia has now accepted the entire Ultimatum. This step so completely resembles her acceptance of the Four Points without reserve last year, even after an Austrian menace, that we are naturally taken aback, and have made up our

¹ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 424.

² *Ibid.*, p. 427.

minds that some fresh deception is intended. As Prussia then hung back from taking part in the course taken by Austria, but when Russia accepted unconditionally, took credit for this to herself, and wished to be admitted into the Conference, so also now. The King has telegraphed the news direct to Victoria. "The King of Prussia to the Queen of England. Russia has accepted. I hasten to transmit the peace-pregnant intelligence, certain that Your Majesty will unite with me in a heartfelt prayer of thanksgiving for the grace of the Almighty. Pray keep my name a profound secret, &c.—FRIEDRICH WILHELM. International Telegraph Company, clerks, &c. £1 16s. 5d. !!"

If Russia has it in contemplation to play us a trick, she is certain to do it this time upon the Fifth Point,¹ because it is upon that (as last year it was upon the third) that Austria has not come under obligation, and although it merely contains the requirement that Bomarsund shall not be fortified again, or converted into a Sebastopol, this will nevertheless be represented as a monstrous demand, and although it must operate for the protection of Germany, and of Prussia in particular, it is certain to be viewed by these very Governments as an injustice. The only other *ruse* open to them is Kars, which was not named in the Ultimatum, because at that time it was not in the Russians' hands. Now, as we have carried, and are still carrying on the war for the maintenance of the integrity of the Turkish Empire, unless that fortress be restored, the war *must proceed*, which would quite please the whole *English* public. We are just beginning to get on our legs in a military point of view, and by March we shall have, united under our command in the Crimea, 60,000 English with 122 guns, 10,000 men of the Foreign Legion, 22,000 men of the Turkish Contingent, and 15,000 Sardinians. In France things are different ; although the French have 150,000 men upon the spot, yet they wish the army away from there to the Rhine, "*parce que l'Allemagne ne tardera pas de subir son destin ordinaire de devenir le théâtre de la guerre*," as the French officers of high rank phrase it. The moneyed interest is desirous of *peace and enjoyments*. But with so volatile a people all this may be different by to-morrow. . . .

¹ The added Point ran thus : "The belligerent Powers reserve to themselves the right which appertains to them to procure, in an European interest, special conditions over and above the four guarantees stipulated by the previous Articles." England had wished to specify what it desired under this head, but Austria had failed, contrary to our anticipation, to do so.

If our fleet is well led, I believe in the destruction of Cronstadt and its fleet, and that St. Petersburg will be in danger of a similar fate. Should peace, however, ensue, I shall be heartily glad, though more for Germany's sake than for ours.

Queen Victoria to Viscount Palmerston.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 27th Feb. 1856.—The Queen returns Lord Clarendon's letter.

The matter becomes very serious, and it would be a bad position for us to be left quite alone in the Conference, which the Russians, the Queen has every reason to believe, are anxiously striving to bring about. In fact, well-informed persons pretend that this was the main aim of Russia in accepting the Austrian ultimatum and going to Paris.

Would it not answer to take this line : to say to Russia, " You have accepted the ultimatum, *pur et simple*, and have now again recognised its stipulations as preliminaries of peace. You will, therefore, first of all, have to execute them ; you may then come to the question of Kars and say you mean to keep it—then you will see that Europe, bound to maintain the integrity of Turkey, will be obliged to go on with the war, and it will be for you to consider whether you mean to go on fighting for Kars ; but at present this is not in question, as you are only called upon to fulfil the engagements to which you have solemnly pledged yourself " ?

Perhaps Lord Palmerston will discuss this suggestion with his colleagues to-night.

To Prince William of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 11th March 1856.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I must thank you heartily for the letter, which appears to have been inspired by the communication (unknown to me) of a letter from me to Uncle Leopold. I am glad that on every occasion when your views and mine do not quite agree, you take up the pen and explain to me your point of view, for that is the surest way of clearing up and setting straight what are, or seem to be, points of difference.

In the present case the difference between your views and mine

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. iii, p. 226.

is in appearance only, for I must wish as heartily as yourself that Prussia should maintain her position as one of the Great Powers, and as such should be a party to a general European treaty ; but, while so wishing, precedence must be given to the necessity that an honourable and secure peace with Russia shall first have been secured, *in* obtaining which the whole labour falls upon England, and *to* the obtaining of which long and alas ! often renewed experience has shown us, that nothing would create such serious obstacles as the infusion of the Berlin element (if I may so call it) into the transactions of the Conference. Firmness and perseverance on our part have so far prevailed hitherto, despite the most decided disinclination on the part of Russia even to carry out the points of the Austrian Ultimatum, which she had accepted, that I begin to believe in peace ; and so soon as that is *assured*, I have no doubt it will be followed by an invitation to Prussia to take part in the general treaty. Should this prove to be the case, you will admit that the Western Powers could not possibly have behaved more justly or dispassionately.

I will say nothing of what they have and have not done in Berlin, and only express my hope that you will yield nothing in the fearless defence of your honour, not from selfishness, but from the reflection that it is good in itself and one of the best things for the nation.

Now I must say one more word about our family affairs. Vicky's Confirmation will take place on Maundy Thursday. Once that is over, there is no further reason for us to wish for the engagement to continue to be kept a secret. We are of opinion that members of both families and our more intimate friends might be informed of it, but that a public announcement should be postponed till nearer the actual date of the wedding. The German ceremony of betrothal is unknown to English custom. The Queen's first public act would be a declaration to Parliament, not so very long before the wedding itself. What we have to do in the interval between now and Vicky's seventeenth birthday is to arrange, as simply and naturally as circumstances permit, so that the young people may be as little embarrassed as possible, to keep the public out of it as far as we can, and to give the opponents of the marriage the impression that it is a settled affair, but not so far political ; that will be managed by our treating the matter as one of arrangement between the families, but not yet to be considered as having political significance. Please let us have your views, for it is highly important that we here do nothing that

your family do not do, and *vice versa*. It would be simpler for you to make the announcement to your own people, and for us to do the same to ours ; I beg you to consider whether any further step is expected with regard to the King. In my opinion Victoria's last letter, of which you have a copy, should be sufficient for him.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

16th March 1856.—We have just heard by a letter from Uncle Leopold, that you are again ill, and that we must give up the hope of seeing you arrive with him to be present at the Confirmation on Thursday. I need not tell you that this is a great disappointment for us, aggravated besides by the cause which detains you. Had you only come to us for the winter ! Coburg does not suit you. . . .

How horrible are these doings in Berlin ! The assassination of the Minister Hinckeldey,² for one can call it by no other name, is a fresh outrage of the really reckless *Kreuz Partei* ! They see in the crime the finger of God, and so adhere to their almost constitutional blasphemy, for the name of God is constantly in their mouths !

In Paris we are making progress, though slowly, and have reached the threshold of peace. Enemies and allies have combined to make the affair a very difficult one for us, and of subterfuges there is no end. Now Prussia is to be invited to become a party to the general peace, to which we shall very readily assent, so soon as we can feel sure that it is no longer in her power to mar the peace for us.

The telegraph has just brought the news of the Empress having been safely delivered of a son.³ Great will be the rejoicing in the Tuilleries. . . .

To the Same.⁴

WINDSOR CASTLE, 21st March 1856.—It may cheer you to hear that the Confirmation yesterday went off exceedingly well. The preliminary examination by Wellesley (Dean of Windsor), which

¹ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 467.

² Chief of the Police in Berlin. He was a Liberal in politics, and endeavoured to improve the condition of the poorer classes in Berlin. He aimed at applying the law equally to all, including the aristocratic class, whose enmity he incurred. A certain von Rochow insulted him, and in the duel that followed Hinckeldey was killed. The middle classes regarded it as a murder.

³ The Prince Imperial, killed in the Zulu War on 1st June, 1879, while serving as an officer attached to the British Army.

⁴ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 470.



H.R.H. *The Princess Royal*, 1855

From the picture by Winterhalter

came off on Wednesday afternoon in the presence of ourselves, Mama, and the Archbishop, was most satisfactory, and Vicky answered very well and intelligently. At the ceremony of Confirmation yesterday, a number of guests were present, whose names you will see in *The Times*. You were sorely missed by us.

Everything went off extremely well. . . . This morning we have taken the Sacrament with Vicky, Uncle Leopold, and Mama.

The Peace is to be signed on Monday. It is not such as we could have wished, still, infinitely to be preferred to the prosecution of war, with the present complication of general policy.

PART FIVE
THE FINAL YEARS

ALBERT had now reached the summit of his career. He enjoyed all the power that Stockmar could possibly have dreamed of for him, or that the Constitution allowed him. His untiring energy had won for him the highest place next to the Queen in the public life of Great Britain. Ministers were no longer in a position to permit him to be present at their meetings as a favour ; now they were asking Albert for his advice. This fact was expressed in his being granted the title—long overdue—of Prince Consort of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. He opened exhibitions, museums, and congresses of learned societies ; he took a leading part in social questions ; he took thought for increasing the Navy, and raising the efficiency of the Army. He had organised the first World Exhibition, and was preparing for the second. He was one of the first to advocate deep draining and the use of steam in agriculture, and the application of chemical inventions to industry. No step forward was there in refinement or civilisation in which Albert had not shown some practical interest.

In his family life he enjoyed the best and purest form of happiness. The Queen adored him just as deeply as in the spring-time of their lives, and their married life seemed like an unbroken chain of honeymoons. A large family was rising round him, consisting of four sons and five daughters, to whose upbringing he devoted all imaginable thought and attention, and who looked up to him with love and admiration. His eldest daughter testifies of him that “ he was the most understanding, most impartial, and loving father, alike friend and master, and ever a pattern of the teaching which he sought to instil.”

A mark of his improved political position appears in the grant of an income, a question that had caused him so much mortification in the early days. It was set right at the time of the Princess Royal’s wedding. His policy of an Anglo-German understanding seemed on the way to being translated into action. He was marrying his

eldest daughter to the future heir to the Prussian throne, the second to that of Hesse, and the rise of his old friend to becoming Regent, and in course of time King, as William I, of Prussia, appeared to justify the highest hopes of Prussia's development on constitutional lines, a necessary preliminary to any form of friendship with England.

In spite of it all, Albert was far from happy. He exhausted his strength in working for the country that had become the home of his choice ; he organised Chobham as a temporary, and Aldershot as the permanent, training camp, and was as anti-Russian as he could possibly be. But when the Crimean War came and Palmerston retired, Albert was assailed by fresh doubts, for—was he not a German and therefore properly sympathetic with Russia ?—he had forced Palmerston to retire ; he was guilty of treason ; he was arrested and was being taken to the Tower ! And all his suggestions, directed at increasing the armed security of England and redoubled by him after the close of the Crimean War, were only partially carried out owing to the obstinacy of Parliament. The British to whom his methodical thoroughness appeared over-theoretic and pedantic, always regarded him as a foreigner, and he himself had never lost the feeling of being a stranger in a strange land. Those who knew him personally paid him unbounded respect, but among the classes farther removed from him he inspired no affection.

And the power he had acquired under Stockmar's tuition—what good was it to him ? He did not care for power in itself, and was never under the spell of its charm. To him it had always been a means for doing good and helping to advance the welfare of mankind. But what success had he had in his own country ? Scarcely any beyond writing memoranda and making suggestions. And what had he achieved in his Fatherland, in Germany ? What were the fruits now of his perpetual worrying over Frederick William IV, whose reign was at an end ? What disillusionment had the turns of Fate in the Crimean War not brought to him ? Was this the sum of all the reward for his having spent himself in labour ?

And his happiness in his family ? Certainly, the Queen adored and worshipped him. As far as she could she anticipated all his wishes. But was that what he wanted ? Did it satisfy him ? He longed for understanding and spiritual companionship, and these the Queen could not give him. The one who had the power of giving him these things was Victoria, the Princess Royal, his eldest daughter, his eager scholar, who had developed early and understood him at once. And now he had had to let her go from him, to Berlin, and correspondence by letter was too slow for a really stimulating and satisfying exchange of ideas and feelings. His only real friends in England had been Peel and Anson, but both of them had

been long under the soil, while the third intimate friend, Cart, his old servant from Coburg, was to die in 1858. And even though he was in general happy in his family life, one care constantly gnawed at his heart. His eldest son, whose qualities were derived less from Albert than from his Hanoverian ancestors, had turned out with his lack of application, his leaning towards frivolity, and his free and independent outlook on life, quite contrary to what his German father wished him to be, and to his education, organised though it had been down to the minutest detail. He was not happy, for he was intensely lonely, and he was by nature not strong enough to tolerate such loneliness.

But are these all the reasons, and could they account for the fact of his life closing at so youthful an age?

Albert's constitution was ever a delicate one. We recall that at four years old he had to be carried up- and downstairs. He was organically sound, but his heart was weak, and his pulse often dead, and the burden of work which he imposed upon himself devoured and consumed his strength. Being not really happy, he took refuge in work, rushing into it with all the tenacity and determination of which he was capable. He gave himself neither rest nor relief. Even in the Preface of his *Speeches and Addresses*, which were published at the instance of the Queen, it is noted that the mistake he made was in taking too much and too varied trouble over his work. He opened institutions, he spoke, he wrote, he organised—and never did his spirit grant itself rest.

Moreover, he was not happy even in his work, which to him was not an end in itself, but only a means to an end. He felt it as simply a treadmill. "One's feelings," he wrote to his daughter in Berlin (23rd May, 1860), "remain under the influence of the treadmill of never-ending business. The donkey in Carisbrook, which you will remember, is my true counterpart. He, too, would rather munch thistles in the Castle Moat, than turn round in the wheel at the Castle Well; and small are the thanks he gets for his labour."

More and more as he became older, aged still more by his unsympathetic English surroundings and the resentments that he was forced to combat, did Albert's old merry nature fade away. His spirit became overshadowed by deep melancholy, and the disposition, that slumbered within him, to despise mankind rose to the surface—in the man who instinctively sought to labour solely for the good of mankind! He often said that he was tired of living, and early in his life he gave expression to thoughts of death. As early as November 1847, he had written prophetically to his brother-in-law, Charles Leiningen, about the death of a Mensdorff cousin, "He is the first of the cousins of our generation to go. *Avis au*

lecteur, always be prepared to pack and be off ! A little while, and no one will bother about us any more ! ”

The Prince’s melancholy became by degrees so overpowering that, after his accident during his last visit to Coburg in the autumn of 1860, Stockmar, deeply impressed by the way in which he was affected by it, was impelled to say, “ God have mercy on us if something really serious happened to the Prince ! It would kill him ! ” On that same visit, Albert was visibly more distressed than ever before at the prospect of departing from his old home, and on the last morning, just before going off, he surprised his brother Ernest by asking him to take a walk with him as far as the fortress. At one of the finest points Albert suddenly stopped dead and took out his pocket-handkerchief. The Duke thought that Albert’s wounds on his nose and forehead due to his accident had begun to bleed afresh, and went up close to him. To his astonishment he noticed tears flowing down Albert’s cheeks : Albert was so deeply convinced that he would never see that view again that his emotions overwhelmed him. In spite of all Ernest’s efforts to soothe him, Albert persisted in declaring that he knew right well it was the last time in his life that he would ever be at his old home. The brothers turned and walked back to the house in silence.

Not long before his last illness Albert spoke even more definitely to his wife.¹ “ I do not cling to life. You do ; but I set no store by it. If only I was assured that those I love were well cared for, I should be quite ready to die to-morrow.” And again : “ I am sure that if I had a severe illness, I should give up at once, and should not fight for my life. I am not tenacious of it.” This he said without a trace of sadness. If it was God’s will, he was ready to stay ; but he was equally prepared to go, if it was otherwise ordained.

Ever since he was fifteen Albert had suffered painfully from rheumatism. By the end of 1857 he began (at the age of thirty-eight !) to be old and grey. Everyone observed it, and the portraits of that period confirm the impression. “ I am tired and dull,” he wrote to Stockmar in January 1858. It was a further sign of ageing that he began to dwell with pleasure on recollections of his youth and to mention them in letters. He was so enfeebled in body and spirit as to have no power of resistance, and it required but one blow to bring about the catastrophe.

This came to pass in November 1861 ; its first cause was a coincidence of injuries to his body and his spirit. During the autumn Albert had been very busy working out a fresh plan for the Prince of Wales’s education. As soon as he had finished with Cambridge,

¹ See Martin, vol. v, p. 415.

he was to travel, as he had already done in Canada, through Greece, Turkey, and the Holy Land, and perhaps to India as well. The first blow fell on 12th November. Albert received news of the death of his cousin, Dom Pedro of Portugal, for whom he had a great affection, and from that moment he suffered severely from insomnia. On the 22nd he went to Sandhurst to inspect the buildings for the new Staff College and Royal Military Academy. Immediately after that he became deeply concerned about his eldest son, and on the 25th went to see him at Madingley. There the two had an outspoken conversation, with reconciliation to follow ; but the father's spirit remained sorely depressed after it. In the evening he had a fit of shivering, and was obliged to stay the night at Madingley. The next day he felt " very wretched," and complained of pains in his back and legs, with great weakness and exhaustion. His doctors did not at first take a serious view of the case, and it was not till later that they diagnosed the illness to be gastric typhoid fever. But the Prince, who had now neither the power nor the will to resist the disease, fully expected from the start that he would die of it.

Nevertheless, his spirit knew no repose. He addressed two further letters to his eldest son full of paternal advice. Then the " Trent affair " arose, threatening war with the United States, and he composed the draft for a conciliatory despatch for the Queen to send to the Foreign Secretary. His action probably averted the menace of war. Finally, he attempted to write to his son, Leopold, but had to give up after the first few lines.

Gradually, almost unperceived by those round him, Albert's life faded away. Only on 7th December did the doctors admit that it was serious, but not in any way hopeless. No one was alarmed so far. Once only, on 7th December, when, lying there, he said to his wife that he heard little birds singing, which made him think of his childhood and the birds at Rosenau, was the Queen really upset. Sometimes he rambled, and then again he would stroke his wife's cheek, calling her " little wife," " good little woman," or lean his haggard face on her shoulder, saying, " It is very comfortable thus, dearest child." On another occasion he asked for music, and his daughter Alice was required to play "*Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*" on the piano, and another *Chorale* as well.

On 12th December the position became clear. The relations and Cabinet Ministers were informed. On being told by Albert's Private Secretary of the critical state of the patient, Lord Palmerston, the Prime Minister, wrote back in terms so startled and horrified that one is left wondering how it could have been that relations between the Prince and Palmerston were so constantly strained.

"MY DEAR PHIPPS,—Your telegram and letter have come upon me like a thunderbolt. I know that the disorder is one liable to sudden and unfavourable turns, but I had hoped that it was going on without cause for special apprehension. The result which your accounts compel me to look forward to as at least possible, is in all its bearings too awful to contemplate. One can only hope that Providence may yet spare us so overwhelming a calamity."

All hopes and prayers were in vain. The end came on the evening of 14th December. Except for his eldest daughter, who was in Berlin, and Prince Alfred, who was with the fleet at sea, Albert's whole family were gathered round him. He had only reached the age of forty-two.

Two days later the news was received at Coburg. Stockmar, himself much bowed down, wrote to Duke Ernest II in terms of rare greatness and fortitude on the terrible tragedy of the Prince's death. The Duke relates : " In his search for comfort, he spoke of the marvellous perfection in which my brother's life passed harmoniously in a shorter span than is the usual destiny of mortals. He had attained a greatness which would assure him his place in history far more speedily than usually happens. Thus he had shaken off the weariness of an existence, which, being cut short at the moment of greatest success, would impress coming generations as a noble work of art."

1856-1861

To Prince William of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 27th March 1856.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—Your reply of the 21st to my last question has caused us some embarrassment. In order to explain its cause, I must repeat more clearly the custom in England. The English know nothing of the German betrothal ceremony, and the language has no word for it. British feeling rises against the conception of a young person being promised away long before the proper time into strange hands for political or family reasons. This not taking place in our case could only be demonstrated to the public by letting them know more of the story of the young people's love affair. And this is not advisable, if only because the very causes which made it originally desirable to us that the proposal should not be made before her Confirmation must now cause us to desire not to have to explain to the public that the proposal really took place before the Confirmation.

The first official act that will be performed on our side is the Queen's announcement to the Privy Council, and this according to custom comes immediately before the negotiation regarding the marriage treaty and (by reason of the Bill before Parliament) before the provision for the bride. The Ministers' reply to any authorised question would be that it is a family matter which concerns nobody. But from the moment the declaration is made, the whole subject is exposed to the public and to Parliament, and both of them have a perfect right to discuss it.

A public announcement in Berlin, as proposed by you, would be taken here as equivalent to a declaration, with the additional objection of giving the British people justifiable cause to feel offence, since

the Queen would be allowing an announcement to be made to the Prussian people, while she was withholding it from her own. Now, the wording of which you enclose a draft would describe in detail all that happened at Balmoral. I enclose in strict confidence two letters from Lord Palmerston and the Lord Chancellor in support of what I have said to you.

You will see from this that we must stick to our opinion, that—since it is neither feasible nor right to continue keeping it a secret—the facts may now be communicated to both our families, but not be announced officially to the public until the date of the wedding has come nearer. I find, after carefully reading through your letter, that nothing stands in the way of this procedure except the custom of your House of inserting in the official *Gazette* an announcement to the family of the betrothal. Is this absolutely necessary? Would omission of this formality produce consequences as troublesome as the observance of it would produce here? I can imagine that to omit this declaration altogether would cause some offence in Prussia; but why could it not be postponed until a simultaneous announcement was made here? The announcement by the Queen would, in my opinion, be just the moment, which you fear might not easily be found again if we do not use for our purposes the date of the Confirmation.

I will go on now to answer your questions, one by one.

1. "Have we to see to it that Parliament plays an initial part, if the betrothal has been announced to the two Royal Families and the formal announcement has been made in the Berlin *Gazette*?" Most certainly, as you will have seen above. But the part played by Parliament can hardly be called "initial," since the announcement in the *Gazette* will appear as the Government's initiative.

2. "Would unsurmountable obstacles in the present Session stand in the way of an announcement to Parliament after the above-mentioned communication to the families?" Yes, as far as we can see now. I refer you to the enclosed letters.

3. "Even if there were no announcement in the Prussian papers, would Fritz showing himself after the families had been told give occasion to Parliament for seizing the initiative?" No. As said above, any unauthorised question would be suppressed..

4. "If the families are not told (in order to avoid irritating Parliament), Fritz could hardly show himself among your family.

Would he have to put off coming over until Parliament adjourns, that is, until it is time to make the family announcement on your side?" Parliament being or not being in Session need not affect Fritz' appearance here. If remarks are to be feared, the Press will be much more unpleasant and obnoxious at a time when no information can be given to it than when a word from a Minister in Parliament can destroy any rumour. The fact of Fritz being here while Parliament is sitting, will not merely not irritate, but will give general pleasure, especially if the public note that the young people are in love with each other, and that they are being given an opportunity of getting to know one another, before they are tied together for life. This rests on one of the most worthy traits in the national character, and if it is known that the young people mutually like each other, political intrigue will be quite powerless to put obstacles in the way of the marriage.

On the other hand, there would be anger if it was thought that at a moment when Prussia and England are at odds politically, the Queen had been trying in secret for dynastic reasons to make an alliance with Prussia, and had sacrificed her daughter's freedom of choice for the sake of it. The more it is made clear that our children's marriage is the outcome of mutual attraction rather than of political motives, the more certain is it that any storm which might arise between now and the date of the wedding will pass by.

If it might be possible to postpone the official announcement in Berlin until it can be made simultaneously here, we should expect Fritz to visit us here on the date originally settled (in May). We look forward to it eagerly, and the longer he can stay, the better we shall be pleased. Please let me have your answer very soon, for any long delay, now that the Confirmation is over, to announcing the engagement to the family may cause pain. We can very well write to the King in the manner you suggest.

To the Same.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 4th April 1856.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—Your dear letter of the 1st has relieved us about the most troublesome point, and it seems that in Berlin also our general scheme has been agreed to. We are both writing to-day to the King, and so breaking the ice with one blow. I hasten to tell

you of this. I need hardly mention that we are very much pleased with this turn of affairs, which allows the whole matter to develop in a natural way.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

OSBORNE, 22nd May 1856.—Your son has communicated to us the sad tidings of your daughter's death, which has caused us great regret. Although her death must be a release from severe suffering, there is little comfort in that thought for a father's heart. I trust your own health may not be injured by this mournful event.

Fritz of Prussia came here yesterday. He looks well and cheerful, and is very happy to be with his bride elect again.

On the 26th we return to London ; and the day after we expect a visit from the Prince Regent of Baden.

To the Same.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 25th June 1856.—I write to you to-day to inform you of an accident, which might have been very disastrous, but which, thank God, has passed off happily, as I should not wish you to get your first tidings of it from the papers. Vicky was sealing a letter at her table, and was all at once in flames, her sleeve having caught fire at the candle. Miss Hildyard was luckily seated at the same table, and Mrs. Anderson was in the room giving Alice her music lesson. They sprang at once to her assistance, and extinguished the flames with the hearthrug. Nevertheless, her right arm is severely burnt from below the elbow to the shoulder. Sir Benjamin Brodie has examined the wound closely with the microscope, and is satisfied that, except on a small spot on the upper part of the arm, the lower skin is uninjured, and that no permanent disabling of the arm is therefore to be dreaded. The poor child showed very great self-possession and presence of mind at the time, and great courage under the pain. She is quite cheerful, her appetite is good, and she looks well.

Naturally we were very much alarmed, and the poor bridegroom quite upset, when he heard of it. It occurred yesterday afternoon about four, at the very time we were engaged at a Council. Had assistance not been so near, and had all parties not shown so much

¹ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 492.

² *Ibid.*, p. 494.

presence of mind, this accident would in all probability have had a tragic ending, for it is impossible to form any idea of the rapidity with which the muslin must have burned. As it is, the worst will be a tedious and painful cure, and we may hope no marks will be left behind. Clark shall keep you advised of the progress of the patient. . . .

The bridegroom goes away the day after to-morrow ; the day after that comes Uncle Leopold, with Charlotte and Philip, and he is to leave us on the 9th, and to be succeeded on the 10th by the Prince and Princess of Prussia.

To Prince William of Prussia.

OSBORNE, 16th August 1856.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—Very many thanks for your dear letter of the 10th, which I only received this morning. It was probably forwarded on to us, as the Ostend post-mark is of the 13th. Just as I am sitting down to answer it, I have been shown an article from Gibraltar in *The Times*, describing the fight that Adalbert¹ seems to have had with the Riff pirates, and in which he was wounded. A shot through the thigh is always a serious matter. The story is given in such detail, as you will see from the cutting which I enclose, that the accuracy of the facts cannot be doubted. We wish very much to know if you have had any news of Adalbert.

Now that Fritz fully agrees with the principle that we explained, that difficulty too is overcome, and Fritz will find that it is the best course for him also.

I also wanted to ask you if anything has been settled about Fritz' journey to Paris. From what we hear from there, he has given notice of his arrival there, or done so through the Prussian Government, and is expected on his way here for his next visit, and it seemed likely that he would want to make some excursions. But we have heard nothing from him or from you. We shall be very glad if it is so, for it would interest Fritz and give him useful experience, and also because it would deliver Prussia from the false and (I admit it) unnecessary position of being looked on simply as the enemy of France and the Emperor. Since Russia lets no opportunity fall of cajoling the French, and Austria has actually sent an Archduke who

¹ Admiral Prince Adalbert of Prussia, Chief of the Prussian Navy.

is to turn his back on us, consequently, in the present state of relations between Prussia and her neighbour, France, and after this present long visit to the other neighbour who was so lately at war with France, the omission of a visit of politeness would be regarded as an intentional demonstration of dislike. I recommend the matter to your careful consideration, and invite you to examine whether it would not be advisable for you to suggest the journey to the King, in case he should not have decided upon it already.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

BALMORAL, 24th September 1856.

DEAR COUSIN,—I add these lines to Victoria's letter with my heartiest good wishes for your birthday, and beg you not to consider yourself obliged to reply to it. You have had so much to bear these last days, that I feel deeply for you, and the best thing I can wish for you is that you may find calm and rest, that you may be able to bear the separation from your dear daughter.¹ The reflection that it is for her lasting happiness will be the richest source from which you can draw comfort and satisfaction. Our newspapers give so full an account of the festivities in Berlin that we feel as if we had been there with you.

Balmoral has recently been visited by rain and stormy weather. The children, including Vicky, have colds. Lord Hardinge's² sudden death will certainly be a real sorrow to the Prince. I will merely now mention that my latest enquiries about Countess Perponcher's character and nature have had a very satisfactory result.

To Baron von Stockmar.³

1st Nov. 1856.—I hear that the tail of your comet was seen in Dürkheim, near Oberheim, and that the astronomers in Brussels have calculated, and are expecting, the speedy entrance of your star into their sphere. We think that, once here, it will come within range of the attraction of our solar system, and we are fain to assume

¹ Princess Louise of Prussia married the Grand Duke Frederick I of Baden on 20th September.

² Viscount Hardinge, Governor-General of India, and later Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, was seized with paralysis during an Audience with the Queen. He died at his seat, South Park, on 24th September, 1856.

³ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 511.



H.R.H. *The Princess Augusta of Prussia, 1854*
Afterwards the Empress Augusta
From the picture by Faija, after Winterhalter

that its course, as prognosticated, must carry it over London and Windsor.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 20th Nov. 1856.—My hearty thanks for your dear letter, with the words of sympathy in our grief for Charles's death.² I was sure you would feel it. The autumn wind has wrenched away another leaf from our family tree, and the love-united band of our good Grandmama's grandchildren is now poorer by one of its oldest and most vigorous members ! In this there lie for us Past, Present, and Future. Poor Mama is chiefly to be commiserated, who thus sees her only son quit the world before herself. She is much bowed down, but composed and touching in her sorrow. For Charles himself death was a release, his life would have been a most sad one. His sons are much to be pitied. Ernest³ is out and out a good and noble man, worthy of the utmost confidence and respect. He is generally liked in his difficult service, and has already faced many dangers ; I wish I could secure him a happy future.

Fritz William is with us. In consequence of our mourning, his welcome visit takes a lugubrious character ; still, as he looks forward to encountering many cares as well as joys with Vicky, their sympathy in sorrow is even now one tie the more. Vicky was greatly attached to her uncle, as indeed were all the children.

To King Frederick William IV of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 1st December 1856.

YOUR MAJESTY,—Your Majesty's gracious and friendly letter of the 25th was handed to me yesterday by dear Fritz. I can entirely understand the state of feeling in which Your Majesty wrote, and can sympathise with the painfulness of your situation, and follow the inner struggle, which the consciousness of high responsibility in your decisions imposes upon you. No one can deny Your Majesty's patience and tenacity of purpose lasting nine years. Your friends, no less than your self, have been at great pains to discover a

¹ See Martin, vol. iii, p. 513.

² Prince Charles of Leiningen, the Queen's half-brother, died on 13th November, 1856.

³ Prince Ernest of Leiningen was at the time a lieutenant in the Navy, and had been present in the Crimean War. He succeeded his brother as Prince Leiningen.

means of liberating your faithful lieges, and of satisfying your offended honour, without involving yourself and perhaps Europe in far greater and more menacing complications.¹

The refusal of the Swiss in reply to your and France's demand for unconditional release of the prisoners proves to us that procedure by bare threats is not the way to gain your ends. The Swiss Government declares itself not to have the right to grant anything to which the country refuses its assent, and well knows that the country is prepared to defend itself to the utmost, should fulfilment of those demands be pressed by an appeal to arms.

Your Majesty declares that "nothing is so dear to you as to justify bloodshed with the exception of the honour of your Crown and name." That is a great and noble word. Will you not entrust this honour to some friend—France, for instance—whom you trust, and communicate to such a second your decisions in confidence, and let him see to it that the dispute shall be settled with satisfaction to your honour?

The new-born thought, which you have in your gracious confidence communicated to me, appals me, for I am sure that if it is carried out your honour is bound to run into great danger. The deposit which you wish to hand over to the Powers is not in your hands, but in those of Switzerland, and since it is not yours to hand over, the Powers will have to seize it for you. If France really did this (which I very much doubt), would it be compatible with the honour of your Crown and your Army for the latter to look on while the French Army redeemed with its blood that which Your Majesty's Army did not and would not dare to attempt? And, if France completed the conquest, would she not rightfully be in a position to dictate to you any conditions that she chose? I can imagine no worse position for Prussia.

Your Majesty has further determined that "should the combined negotiations with the Powers result in your having to renounce your sovereign rights unconditionally," you would not oppose delivery

¹ During the night of 2nd September, 1856, the King's party in the Canton of Neuchâtel made a *coup d'état* and seized four members of the Government. On the 4th, however, the Republicans regained power and imprisoned a number of the King's supporters. Switzerland rejected the demand of Prussia that the prisoners should be released unconditionally, and war became imminent. Finally, in answer to Napoleon III's mediation, the Confederacy released the prisoners on condition that they left the country. Under the Treaty of Paris, 26th May, 1857, Frederick William IV renounced with a heavy heart his rights over Neuchâtel.

of them by the Powers to the Swiss. If Your Majesty were willing to specify confidentially but clearly what results would satisfy you and what you would be prepared, under conditions, to renounce, the Powers would be in a position to calculate whether the other party could accept the conditions. Then they could assemble in conference and give their decision, and this could be carried out without danger to anyone.

Your Majesty has really no other alternative than either to fight or to allow your second to settle the dispute. If you fought, you would have to make terrible sacrifices for an insignificant objective, and would not be able to foresee in the least the end of a war, which would inflame every political passion in Europe. Besides this, the right of Prussia to start a war for the Prince of Neuchâtel against Switzerland is highly doubtful ; whereas it is Prussia's duty as a Great Power to protect the neutrality of Switzerland, and it is the duty of the Canton of Neuchâtel to fight with Switzerland against any foreign aggression. These duties are based on indisputable treaties. In the second case, your honour would certainly be satisfied, and your faithful followers would be released.

Meanwhile, the trial of those unhappy men is beginning, and the object of the opposing party must be to prove your Government's complicity in the rising of September, in order to win public opinion over to the side of Switzerland. And if the prisoners are found guilty—which no one at this moment can prevent—Your Majesty will be held up to the derision of all Europe.

Forgive me if I have not obeyed Your Majesty's command not to reply to you. My loyal devotion and friendship would have reproached my conscience for ever if I had failed to submit to your better judgment the considerations which Your Majesty's letter suggests to me.

With the most sincere wishes for Your Majesty's well-being, I remain, Your Majesty's loyal servant and cousin, ALBERT.

To Prince William of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 25th December 1856.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I received your letter of the 20th yesterday evening and take advantage of Sir Colin Campbell's¹ departure to answer it. I rejoice that you feel a need in every political crisis to

¹ Later Lord Clyde.

resume your exchange of ideas with your friend in England, who is under a like necessity. At Coblenz, far removed from the joining-point of the myriad threads which have been spun around this matter and have led up to the present complication, and, as you say, not being acquainted with them all, you were bound to form such an opinion as you express in your letter. I entirely agree with it. But as unfortunately for myself, I have had to know all the details, I venture to set you right on certain points which affect the position and feelings of England. There is no irritation whatever here, as you seem to assume, at the King's having shown preference for France rather than for England. The views of the Government are not influenced by any grudge due to a lapse in formalities. It is thought quite natural for the King to be trying through the Emperor Napoleon to get what he can, and if the Emperor were successful, they would be sincerely pleased in this country. But as it was known beforehand that the Emperor's methods would lead to nothing but an increase of irritation, they regretted quite rightly that—after the King had specified his conditions, and we had heard confidentially of their acceptance by Switzerland, and could have settled the matter completely in a day or two—the King suddenly swerved from his path to engage himself on one which, as we expected, led into a blind alley.

The British public are violent pro-Swiss, and the Press is unrestrained in its savage attacks on Prussia. The cause is not the old complaint of the Eastern question (although deep mistrust of the King's policy ever since his accession—including the Eastern question—has much to do with it), but the fact that here no one understands Prussia's so-called point of honour. They know that Neuchâtel is a Province of Switzerland and not of Prussia, that the King exercised certain rights there, which were useless to him and injurious to Switzerland, and have been fictitious for the last eight years ; that he will be obliged, and is really ready, to end by giving them up, and that, as soon as this is done, he can rescue his compromised followers. They call it a mixture of mental distortion and malicious wickedness on the part of the King, that he should allow several thousand men to risk their lives, and perhaps set all Europe on fire, before he will consent to do what he will in the end have to do. The British people know that Europe guaranteed the integrity and neutrality of Switzerland, and that if Prussia once

starts a war, she may get into an extremely awkward position, which her King ought to have considered calmly beforehand.

I think that the affair is becoming worse with each step. I do not even think that success will necessarily attend the arms of Prussia, and I dare not imagine the consequences of failure. But if better judgment should turn to methods of diplomacy rather than those of war, I feel assured that neither England nor France would fail to give willing assent to it. But I do not agree with your idea that not a binding promise, but a mere indication—from one of Frederick William IV's character—would be sufficient as a basis. No British statesman would feel justified in risking the honour of England on such security, and if France were prepared to do it, Switzerland would not regard that as a sufficient guarantee. Such a case arose a month ago when General Dufour¹ was in Paris. He declared that on the guarantee of France the Swiss Government were not in a position to demand of the Confederacy that the prisoners should be released, but that on a combined British and French guarantee they would do so at once. We were pressed by France and Switzerland to give our consent, but naturally refused to bind the King of Prussia in his dealings with a third party, so long as he did not bind himself against us. May Heaven protect us from the evils of a general war.

Permit me to express my pleasure that, as Great Master of the Order of the Bath, it is my duty to prepare the Patent, which Sir Colin Campbell will present to you. Please accept on that occasion my heartiest congratulations on completing fifty years of military service. You have fallen upon a sad epoch, which will become a glorious one. May you in the many, as I hope, years to follow, only come across glorious ones. In sincere friendship, Ever your loyal cousin, ALBERT.

Fritz appears to have enjoyed himself well in Paris, and to have been received in a most friendly manner.

To the Same.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 12th January 1857.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I have just received your dear letter of the 8th at the same time that Victoria received your letter and the King's

¹ This Swiss general, in the conflict with Prussia over the possession of Neuchâtel, was put at the head of the Republican Army, and was sent to Paris to obtain the mediation of Napoleon III. Napoleon had been one of his pupils at the Military School at Thun.

to her. As time presses, and as according to your letters you both appear to be uncertain as to the steps that have been taken in Paris, I hasten to reply and to beg you to communicate to the King this letter as being relevant to the appeal that he addressed to Victoria. We regard the Neuchâtel crisis as having been surmounted. Lord Cowley and Count Walewski ¹ have addressed Notes to Herr Barman, who accepts them as a full assurance for a final settlement of the Neuchâtel case. His Government is now empowered to get the prisoners out of the hands of the Federal Assembly. The Government appears to be confident in its ability to do this. The release will solve the part of the problem which might have led on to a war, possibly a European and revolutionary one. Once the prisoners are released, and now that the King has resolved to exercise self-denial, the negotiations ought to present no great difficulty. I may therefore wish luck to the passing of a great danger to Europe.

We are delighted that Victoria's manner of showing how highly she values you on the occasion of your Jubilee of military service has pleased you so much, and I naturally share in it most heartily.

My official letter regarding the Bath requires no answer. Sir Colin's report for the Archives of the Order will be quite sufficient.

To the Same.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 13th January 1857.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—Since my letter of yesterday I am moved to write to you again to-day. News has come from Berlin that the Prussian Government, now that there is a prospect of the prisoners being released, wants to go back on its word. We have it from an official source that—it must be assumed that because the King stated his willingness, if the prisoners are released, to enter into negotiations, he is not perfectly justified in reinstating his rights by all the means in his power. He is King of Prussia and Prince of Neuchâtel, and his people are prepared to support him with all their strength in carrying out his intentions, and will not suffer any encroachment on his rights.

I hasten to assure you that Victoria and I do not believe in any such intentions of the King to reinstate his rights, now that the prisoners are to be released. We do not believe it because such

¹ French Ambassador in London.

action would contradict all the King's utterances up to the present and all his assurances to his friends. We do not believe it, because we think it will be impossible to carry out such intentions. At the same time I consider it my duty to tell you of the serious anxiety this news is bound to cause our Government. If the King does not renounce his rights after the prisoners are released, we shall have the Swiss saying to us that we led them into a trap when we persuaded them to stop the trials. If the King really carries out the intention that is imputed to him, there will be a storm of resentment in this country ; consideration for France or Prussia will not prevent full expression of this feeling in Parliament, and the Government themselves will find it hard to conceal their sympathy with the national feeling. That will be its first reaction on us. I cannot picture to myself the possible further results for Europe, for Prussia, and for himself, if the King acts as he apparently intends to.

Just because of the greatness of the evil we must wish to see the anxiety it causes us allayed as soon as possible, and I shall owe you much gratitude if you will reassure us regarding that assumption of the King's intentions, and fortify our conviction of its groundlessness by telling us that you also are convinced of it.

I enclose in strict confidence a passage out of the Emperor Napoleon's last letter to Victoria, and you will see how the affair is regarded over there.¹

To Viscount Palmerston.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 3rd March 1857.

MY DEAR LORD PALMERSTON,—The Queen has this moment received your letter giving so unfavourable an account of the prospects of to-night's division. She is sorry that her health imperatively requires her going into the country for a few days, and having put off her going to Windsor on account of the Debate which was expected to close yesterday, she cannot now do so again to-day. She feels, however, the inconvenience of her absence should the division turn out as ill as is now anticipated. The Queen could not

¹ *Je viens de recevoir de bien bonnes nouvelles de Suisse. Il paraît que l'Assemblée Fédérale va mettre sur ma proposition les prisonniers Neufchâtelois en liberté. Le juste amour propre du Roi de Prusse sera satisfait et la Conférence obtiendra de lui sa renonciation à une vaine Souveraineté. Le Roi m'en a déjà donné l'assurance. Je pense que cette nouvelle fera plaisir à V.M. Je voudrais bien néanmoins que son Gouvernement se joignit au mien pour terminer à Berne ce différent.*

² See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. iii, p. 290.

possibly come to a decision on so important a point as a Dissolution without a personal discussion and conference with you, and therefore hopes that you might be able to go down to-morrow perhaps for dinner and to stay over the night.

The Queen feels herself physically quite unable to go through the anxiety of a Ministerial Crisis and the fruitless attempt to form a new Government out of the heterogeneous elements out of which the present Opposition is composed, should the Government feel it necessary to offer their resignation, and would on that account *prefer any other alternative*. . . . Ever, etc., ALBERT.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 20th March 1857.

DEAR COUSIN,—I have written to Fritz, and now find a moment to spare to thank you for your dear letter and kind news. We are delighted that you and the Prince agree with us so completely. I only hope that young Stockmar accepts his appointment.¹ He is very independent and unambitious, and so naturally depends for what he decides to do on the trust and goodwill with which he is met, and the recognition that he is serving a useful purpose ; then he will do good work. It is possible that the long interval between the first suggestion and the actual offer of the appointment may have caused him some perplexity. He asked me for time to think it over, so I have not continued to urge him, for I have great confidence in his character and understanding, and I must credit him with being able to realise that his services are needed.

To the Same.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 15th April 1857.

DEAR COUSIN,—Victoria, at whose bedside I am sitting, wishes me to thank you for your two last letters and to express her pleasure at them, as she cannot do it herself. The lithographs and photographs have arrived.

Mother and baby² are well. Baby practises her scales like a good *prima-donna* before a performance, and has a good voice ! Victoria counts the hours and minutes like a prisoner. The children want

¹ Baron Ernest von Stockmar became Treasurer to the Princess Royal.

² Princess Beatrice, born 14th April, 1857, afterwards Princess Henry of Battenberg.



H.M. Queen Victoria, H.R.H. The Prince Consort and Children

From the picture by F. Winterhalter, at Buckingham Palace

to know what their sister is to be called, and dispute which names will sound best, and Vicky says with a sad sigh, "The little sister will never have known me in the house." Alfred telegraphs from Geneva, "I am delighted to hear it and hope Mama and the baby are well."

I only wish that all may have gone off as well with your daughter as it has here, though we had to wait a fortnight beyond the time for the princess, and she kept us waiting at the door for 13 hours before she would come in.

You will gather how nicely all is arranged when I tell that the two nurse's names are Mrs. Lilly and Mrs. Innocente !

To Prince William of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 4th May 1857.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I take advantage of the courier's departure to thank you for your dear letter. We knew that you would take a lively interest in the event which has added a new member to our family. Alas ! since then another member has passed away, whom I know that you respected and revered. The death of the good Duchess of Gloucester¹ will be felt as a manifold and lasting blank. We have lost a personal contact with that earlier period out of which ours grew, and one to be reverently studied in view of the healthy development of our generation. Her alert intellect, which she retained to the last, and her charitable benevolence and sympathy, won her a large circle of friends who will mourn her deeply.

The funeral is to be at Windsor on the 8th. I shall come up from Osborne, where we hope to be settled a few days earlier. To-morrow I go to Manchester to open a great Exhibition of Art, and the day after I open a new Park and a Museum, and unveil a statue of Victoria at Salford, and hurry back to be present at a Council to discuss the Speech from the Throne. This is to be delivered the day after to-morrow, for the Opening of Parliament (on this occasion by Commission) takes place the day after that.

The question of Vicky's dowry will be introduced in about three weeks, and the announcement to the Cabinet will probably take place on the 16th. I shall inform Berlin more particularly as to the day.

The Neuchâtel affair is still not settled. The Treaty agreed to at the Conference has not yet been accepted in Berlin. What you

¹ Mary, wife of William, Duke of Gloucester, the last surviving child of George III. She died on 30th April, 1857.

say about it and about the necessity of taking the King's peculiar character and ways of dealing into account is quite true, but what is bad about it is that his promises have certainly not been kept, nor perhaps will be, unless we continue to take the stand which we have all along taken, and this gives us a bad appearance of great hostility to the King and to Prussia, and will cause much trouble and vexation. The King's personal friends go about saying that he feels such a duty towards the Royalists, that he must be in a position to prove that Europe has forced his hand, before he can afford to give way. This rôle of compulsion has with much cleverness and little honesty been allotted by France and the rest of the Powers alone to us, among whom, as everyone knows, the custom of Parliament demands that Ministers shall give an account of their stewardship, and that we must show proof of a fair and consistent policy. Therefore we cannot leave the Swiss in the lurch. The others are, or pose as being, generous and more judicious friends. As regards the conditions, the King might at any rate have adopted a generous, disinterested and therefore commanding attitude, if he had abstained from demanding the two million francs for himself ; such an attitude and claiming money at the same time do not go well together. In this question the money was worth nothing, whereas the proviso was grist to the mill for all the King's enemies. . . .

When we go to Osborne, Stockmar and his son will return to the Continent. It is always painful when the father goes away. His presence with us is always a great pleasure and support.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

OSBORNE, 27th May 1857.—. . . You must have been pleased at the passage through Parliament of Vicky's dowry and the way in which the Bill was received. A fresh attack by the Radicals only produced 14 votes against 342. Her allowance is not large,¹ but it makes her independent, which is most important for her.

To Baron von Stockmar.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 27th June 1857.—Since my last letter I have made my speech at the Educational Conference ; you will

¹ Parliament voted a dowry of £40,000, and an annuity of £8,000.

² See Martin, vol. iv, p. 65.

perhaps have read it in *The Times* of the 23rd. It has been well received here ; still, I should greatly like to have your judgment upon it, which for now nearly nineteen years has always been to me most precious on everything that concerns me.

The day before yesterday was the Council, at which the Patent for my creation as Prince Consort and the consequent change in the Liturgy was authorised. Thus this question is settled at last. How the step has been regarded by the public I have not yet learned. *The Times* had a *sneeringly approving* article yesterday, in which the news is announced, by way of return for its being the first to have the news communicated to itself ! . . .¹

The Archduke² left us after the Grand Ball of the 24th, and, to all appearance, with a heavy heart ! Uncle Leopold may congratulate himself on such a son-in-law.

Bertie leaves for Germany on the 6th.³ We go the day after to-morrow to Manchester for three days, and return on the 2nd, when Uncle Leopold with Charlotte and Philip are to come to us.

Yesterday was the great Review for the distribution of the Victoria Crosses.

*To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.*⁴

June 1857.—I have not said a word to you about my change of title, and I now present myself before you as an entire stranger, “Prince Consort,” to wit. The change had become necessary as our sons grew up, all sorts of confusion having already arisen, especially as the names of all three begin, like my own, with an A, and I was certain to appear to them in the long run, like a stranger in the land, as they alone were English princes, and I merely a Coburg prince. Now I have a legal status in the English hierarchy. It was also a source of weakness for the Crown that the Queen always appeared before the people with her *foreign* husband.

¹ The tone of the article may be judged of by the last sentence : “ In spite of the poet there is much in a name, and if there be increased homage rendered to the new title on the banks of the Spree or the Danube, the English people will be happy to sanction and adopt it.” The English people *had* adopted it years before.

² The Archduke Maximilian of Austria, afterwards Emperor of Mexico. He was shot there under martial law in 1867. His widow, Charlotte, daughter of Leopold I of Belgium, lost her reason. She died at the Château of Bouchout, near Brussels, in 1927.

³ The Prince of Wales travelled abroad for several months, visiting Liège, Namur, Aix-la-Chapelle, and Königswinter ; then on by Bonn to Switzerland.

⁴ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 66.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 14th July 1857.

DEAR COUSIN,—I send these lines by Fritz, who will be able to tell you everything about us. I would specially call your attention to his important visit to the City, and enclose a cutting which gives the speeches delivered on that occasion. Fritz is said to have made an excellent speech. He made a wonderfully good impression on the people. According to his description, he seemed to me to have felt deeply the enthusiastic friendliness of a free people in the centre of its commercial and financial activities.

I have still not answered your long letter, for I have not had a moment of peace.

A really splendid person was lost to us to-day, whom I had invited to be Comptroller of Fritz' future Household. He was frightened off it by his excessive modesty and lack of confidence in the possibility of being able to form a Household, which in his opinion would do him credit, out of a personnel chiefly consisting of old soldiers.

Thank God that your daughter is so well. Fritz will be delighted to see her again as a mother.¹

To Prince William of Prussia.²

26th July 1857.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—Accept my sincere thanks for your welcome letter of the 17th. We are delighted to hear that Fritz has gone back so well satisfied with his *official séjour* in England. It will have convinced him that the country regards with the greatest pleasure the connection which he has formed with our family; that it does every justice to himself personally, and looks upon him both as man and as Prince of Prussia with a kindly feeling. Of all this we were well aware, but it could not be otherwise than gratifying to us to see it made clear to the whole world and recognised by himself. On his side he has produced a most favourable impression by his appearances in public here.

As you refer in your letter to the Indian complications, I think it well to communicate to you my views upon the subject. I

¹ The future Grand Duke of Baden was born on 9th July, 1857.

² See Martin, vol. iv, p. 85.

believe that people on the Continent do not correctly appreciate the position of things in India, and the principle upon which our supremacy over that part of the world is founded.

The Indians are not a people capable of conquering independence for themselves, to say nothing of maintaining it. Since the days of Bacchus and Nimrod India has constantly been overrun and conquered by new races,—the Assyrians and Persians, the Greeks under Alexander, the Hiungnu, Tartars, Arabians, and others, down to the most recent times. The conquerors have brought under the yoke and oppressed the races whom they found in possession, but have neither rooted them out nor absorbed them; thus they remain intermingled, but without national coherence.

The religious gulf betwixt the Hindoos and the Mohammedans makes amalgamation impossible. Among the Hindoos themselves the attachment to caste makes anything like internal unity among the population no less impossible. Our supremacy rests purely upon the circumstance that we protect the different races and populations against mutual ill-usage, that we place the poorest and meanest upon the same level before the law as the most powerful, and ensure justice with unimpeachable fairness and the greatest facility to everyone in all parts of the country, while at the same time we do not interfere in any of the internal affairs, civil or spiritual, of the different populations. Oppression is out of the question. Import duties are not levied. The Salt Monopoly was the only tax which weighed upon the Indians, and this has been abolished. The Company derives its revenues from the domains of former great proprietary chiefs, from Customs duties, and from commercial enterprise.

For the country and its civilisation almost nothing has been done up to this time, yet the people bless the protectorate under which they live, after the hideous sufferings which their former rulers compelled them to undergo; and it remains to this hour an open question, how far, with their peculiar religions and customs, civilisation upon European principles is possible or practicable among them.

Of late this negative system has been to some extent departed from. Canals and railways have been begun, schools founded, the burning of widows has been forbidden, and their re-marriage legalised, the temple of Juggernaut with its horrible service has been closed, and the maintenance of idols discontinued, &c.

These measures have been taken by the Hindoos as proofs that England means to suppress their religion, and to put Christianity in its place.

The new cartridges for the Minié rifles, which are dipped in grease that they may slip more easily into their places, have brought matters to a head ; for in this the troops fancied they saw a purpose of making them lose their caste, which would inevitably follow from introducing either grease or flesh into their mouths.

Of the Indian armies—those of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay—the first belongs to the highest caste. In a single battalion there are frequently as many as 400 Brahmins (priests). The loss of caste is political and social death, like the ban of the Pope or of the German Empire in our middle ages. We cannot, therefore, be surprised at the mutiny of the Bengal army, which attracted to itself all who were ill-disposed to the Government. At the same time, the fact that the people have nowhere taken part in it, shows how satisfied they are with the English rule.

The conflict will undoubtedly be severe and bloody, as the few well-organised European troops are scattered and divided over the whole country, and will have to be led against overwhelming numbers of those very troops whom England has for quite a century been teaching discipline, and which, being as they are the garrisons of the great cities, are now in possession of our chief arsenals and fortresses. Where we have the advantage is, the want of all superior officers in the Sepoy regiments ; and what causes a thrill of horror is the thought of having to fire at our own uniform, of the acts of vengeance of the English soldiery, and of the unavoidable punishments which must be inflicted upon the malefactors.

Your own campaign in Baden gave you sad experience in all these matters.

If we get over the crisis, which I firmly believe we shall, the general result may possibly be good.

The confidence of the public in the Indian army, even to the disadvantage of the Queen's forces, to which the entire press has sedulously contributed, has proved to be utterly mistaken ; and now we shall, no doubt, have recourse to a rational military system.

Whether the Company will maintain its position is somewhat doubtful : “ *qui vivra, verra.* ”

The English public is calm and composed, the Ministry *too*

calm for my notions, and therefore we are constantly digging our spurs into their sides.

Now, however, I will release you from my Indian gossip, and remain always, &c., &c., ALBERT.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

BALMORAL, 30th August 1857.

DEAR COUSIN,—I thank you from my heart for your good wishes and for the beautiful present with which Victoria adorned my birthday table in your name. It will be a worthy reminder of you. I am delighted to hear that my letter sent by Countess Blücher found an echo in your heart. Since then the servant has given notice, but I have found another who may perhaps turn out better. I am glad to have done so, for Fritz writes that, if I have not already done so, he would like to engage a second Prussian instead of an English one. You will see that it is no use arguing, and experience alone can bring training, by which I mean convictions. If these are not there, their place is naturally occupied by prejudice, which is quite right, and far better than if the place were not there at all. Our good German language is wonderfully precise and deeply philosophic. Hence the word “prejudice.”

Bertie telegraphed that he had seen you. He is making an enviable tour, and, with God’s will, with all the good that we promise ourselves that it will do him. It is my paternal heart, which your maternal heart understands and can therefore never be unjust to it. Bertie has made the acquaintance of Prince Metternich and old Arndt,¹ two survivals of the great epoch, on which our present situation is based.

We arrived here yesterday evening rather exhausted, and shall be revived to-day by downright cool weather, which will freshen us anew for our return to business. We have brought the exhausted Clarendon with us, and the air will do him good.

To Baron von Stockmar.²

BALMORAL, 7th Sept. 1857.—I have not hitherto written to you from the Highlands, where all is lovely and peaceful, and my only

¹ Prince Metternich, the great Austrian statesman (1773–1859). Ernst Arndt, German poet and patriot (1769–1860). He sat at the National Assembly at Frankfort, and retired with Gagern when Frederick William IV refused the Imperial Crown.

² See Martin, vol. iv, p. 125.

want frequent tidings that you are well. Unhappily this is not to be. I believe change of air and place would do you good, even were it only from Marisfeld to Coburg. Monotony of place is in your case, unfortunately, prejudicial, as in the struggle of the nerves with the body you require to support and back up the nerves in every way, and you are more susceptible to mental and spiritual influence than you are to medicine.

You probably smile at my medical dissertation, but even if it only makes you do that, it will have done some good.

The Indian news continue very bad, and cause us much anxiety. Our military organisations for averting disasters so great are quite inadequate, and we have to bully and extort what is necessary from the Ministry bit by bit.

Palmerston is once more possessed by all his juvenile levity. It is the misfortune of all speakers in large assemblies, that, because fluency and a certain patriotic tone produce a great effect there, and gain great applause, nay even political influence, they imagine they have mastered the essentials of actual fact, which in reality has no concern whatever with mere talk. The French Convention and the Pauluskirche¹ are the latest and most striking illustrations. I cannot sit quietly and see such things.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

BALMORAL, 13th September 1857.

DEAR COUSIN,—I must thank you for the present sent from Weimar. It is long since I have been as much comforted and enspirited as I have been by Droysen's work.² I consider that it stiffens one's faith in the future of the Fatherland and in the permanence of certain principles, however cruelly they may still be kept under by a hostile fate and trodden under foot. The history of your grandfather's patriotic work gives a deep insight into the history of German development, and the comparison between the years 1780–88 and 1846–51 is horribly accurate.

The Germanising of Prussia is the condition of her greatness and power and of bringing peace to Germany; the aspiration to Prussianise Germany is the weakness of Prussia and of Germany and the source of the disfavour and antipathy with which the rest of

¹ Where the National German Parliament sat in 1848–49.

² J. G. Droysen, *Karl August und die Deutsche Politik* (Jena, 1857).

Germany unfortunately still regards Prussia. I have given the work to Vicky to read, and it will certainly interest Fritz uncommonly also.

To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.¹

BALMORAL, 14th Oct. 1857.—The departure from here will be a great trial to us all, especially to Vicky, who leaves it for good and all ; and the good simple Highlanders, who are very fond of us, are constantly saying to her, and often with tears, “ I suppose we shall never see you again ! ” which naturally makes her feel still more keenly. . . .

The Indian news is not worse, and therefore better ; it is, however, a fearful state of things. Since the Polish revolution no army has mutinied against its own government ; in the present case the mutinous army is 200,000 men strong, against whom 24,000 Englishmen have to maintain a kingdom of 200 millions of men of different races and religions ! The task is well nigh superhuman, but it will be nobly performed.

To Prince William of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 17th October 1857.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I can no longer refrain from expressing my feelings for you in the difficult days through which you have just passed.² God be praised that the last news of the poor King is rather better, but even so his condition must be a most anxious one. It is hard for you in your peculiar position to see your beloved brother in such suffering, and it demands all your pious trust in God, all your manly strength and careful prudence. God’s help will not fail you, and you have faithful friends in your wife and son. Your wife writes from Coblenz very anxious and worried at being away from you, and yet with the discretion that seeks to reason out how things hang together and to realise the future. Your son writes pious and loving letters to Vicky, who also feels deeply for you. We were expecting him here to-day so as to celebrate his birthday with him to-morrow, but now it is uncertain when we shall

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 134.

² King Frederick William IV had had a stroke in July. On 5th October he became so much worse that his end was thought to be near. On 23rd October he appointed his brother, William, to represent him, and in October, 1858, the Prince became Regent. The King’s mental failure became more and more pronounced, and finally he was released by death on 2nd January, 1861.

see him. We think it essential to see him once more before the wedding, if only for quite a short stay. At this moment we cannot judge how the King's condition will affect the date of the wedding and the festivities.

I beg you to give my messages to the poor Queen and your brothers and sisters. We got back yesterday from Scotland, all in the best of health. The interesting political events of the meetings of the three Emperors¹ and of yours with the Emperor Napoleon tend to wane under the impression of the present crisis ; nevertheless I should have liked to hear something about it from you.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 27th October 1857.

DEAR COUSIN,—Here is an answer at last to all your kind letters. I feel most ungrateful, but I could not write earlier or until this courier who leaves to-day. The position of affairs in Berlin is most painful and distressing, and I appreciate most deeply your anxiety and worry at seeing so much that is important and sacred at the mercy of chance without being able to help. In fact, you might run a risk of even doing harm in a case where your help would not be properly appreciated. Under such circumstances I think that the following rule of life may be useful, that is, to keep the unavoidable, and what Fate brings to us without our agency, separate from what we ourselves bring to it by our own choice and action. Of the first one ought to be able to say with the Duke of York in *Richard II* : “With me things past mending are things past care,”² seeing that complaining only weakens the efficiency of him who is called upon to act. But in cases where we influence circumstances by our choice and action, it is impossible to examine into things too precisely and carefully. If a man is really in suffering and has to endure the torture of making a choice, he is always sensitive and irritable. When he has to accept responsibility for what Fate has brought on him unavoidably, he will, under the feeling of injustice added to his suffering, be very likely to turn against advice pressed upon him, if it is about a matter on which he has to make up his mind for himself. In a case like yours I can imagine

¹ Napoleon and the Emperor of Russia met at Stuttgart on 25th September, 1857, and a few days later the Emperors of Russia and Austria met at Weimar.

² The correct quotation is : “ Things past redress are now with me past care ” —*Richard II*, act II, scene 3 (last line).

nothing worse than the separation which makes complication difficult and complete understanding impossible, and destroys peace of mind. That is why I have been thinking so much about you.

Thank God, you are passing from confusion over to a clearer condition of things ! The King's action in appointing the Prince has laid on him a very difficult and thankless task, but one that can be dealt with. I have set down my ideas of how it should be accomplished in a letter to Fritz, which he may perhaps show to his father. I enclose a copy for you and therefore need not repeat myself. Fritz had written me a very good letter, which seemed to describe very efficiently the situation and the dangers ahead. I gratefully return Fritz' letter to you, which you were so kind as to let me read.

Young Stockmar performed all your commissions for me quite correctly. As regards the Comptroller of Fritz' Household, we are nearer making a selection, and have picked out a Prussian.

Vicky has been busy recently translating Droysen's *Karl August*, and has nearly finished it. It was hard work owing to the peculiarity of his style ; the subject also was so purely national. But she has done it quite well. I mean to hand my task of correction over to E. Stockmar now. It will make a good subject for conversation.

I think it very wise of you to be looking about for a Private Secretary, and the choice of young Brandis appears, from all I have heard of him, to be very suitable. I advise you, if I may, not to let his position be in any way ambiguous, but to explain openly to him what he is to be to you, and to settle him socially, financially, etc., etc., so as to enable him to do what you will and may expect of him. *J'aime les positions nettes.*

I will not fail to discuss with Fritz the subjects which you desire me to. We now hope again to see him. The plans for the wedding, etc., etc., must be settled. We have come to a standstill like oxen in front of a hill.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

13th Nov. 1857.—The fresh disaster which fatal November has brought about at fatal Claremont is sure to have stirred you deeply.²

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 139.

² The Duchesse de Nemours (Princess Victoire of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha), the wife of Louis Philippe's second son and a cousin of the Queen and the Prince Consort died at Claremont on 10th November, 1857, in childbirth, under similar circumstances to those of Princess Charlotte, King Leopold I's first wife, who also died there.

I thought of you at once and of the old wounds which the similarity of the circumstances would reopen in your heart, just forty years and four days since poor Uncle lost his darling wife in child-birth. Nemours has lost his dear, to us all so dear, Victoire ! in the room nearly above that in which the Princess Charlotte died.

Her confinement passed off well on the 28th of last month, and everyone was doubly rejoiced at this, because Victoire had herself entertained the gloomiest misgivings, and constantly expressed her conviction that she would be borne to the grave. The old Queen and Nemours visited us here, and even expressed their joy, that now the curse was taken from their house, that a healthy child had been born at Claremont, and that the mother was in excellent health. On the 7th, after the lapse of nine days, Victoria visited Victoire. Not only had not the slightest symptom of indisposition been observed, but everything had taken its regular course. The Paris doctor had declared her convalescent, and in leaving reminded her how foolish her apprehensions had been. She replied, "*Il ne faut pas triompher trop tôt.*" Victoria found her looking aged and drawn, and not like a patient who was making a rapid recovery, and ascribed this to the French treatment. On the morning of the 10th about half-past nine (on the 13th day therefore), having been *coiffée*, she was seated upon the bed and had told her dresser, who wanted to rub her feet, to cease doing so, as they were quite warm, and now she was quite well, this as a rule was no longer necessary, and that she was to be allowed to get up the next day. They asked her if she would like to see the new dress which she was to wear the following day. "Certainly," she replied, "*car demain je me ferai belle.*" She had the dress in one hand, when suddenly she exclaimed, "*Oh, mon Dieu, madame——*" She was unable to finish the sentence, her head fell on one side, and life had left her ! Poor Nemours was reading *The Times* to his mother in the room below, and alarmed by the footsteps of the women overhead, rushed upstairs, and found her hand already growing cold !

I hurried over that afternoon to the house of mourning, and words cannot picture the woeful spectacle which met me there. Nemours quite crushed and stunned ; the body of good dear Victoire pale and rigid, but like an angel of beauty, her glorious hair falling in waves over her bosom, and in the adjoining room the baby in rosy unconscious slumber. I was deeply moved, and not less so was

Victoria, who drove over with me the next day. Victoire was the playfellow of my youth, she was Victoria's friend from girlhood ; goodness, gentleness, unassuming sweetness, and love itself ! To-morrow her body will be laid in the little vault at Weybridge beside that of King Louis Philippe ! I shall join in paying her the last honours.

The relaxing treatment, so antagonistic to our English principles, which, instead of lending support and strength to the frame, rather disarms and makes it unfit for the struggle it has to encounter, may very likely have contributed to the catastrophe.

I have gone into all these details, because I know they will interest you. Misery like this makes us doubly grateful to God, who has hitherto shielded us so graciously.

The latest intelligence from Delhi and Lucknow leads us to anticipate a happy issue to our struggles. Still we have to mourn a fearful number of victims.

Fritz is to come to us on the 16th or 17th ; no change has been made as to the marriage day. Your son makes himself extremely useful.

To Prince William of Prussia.

OSBORNE, 16th December 1857.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—The mass of business with which you must be overwhelmed makes it my duty not to bother you with letters, and I hope I have proved my discretion by my golden silence, although in these recent critical times I have often longed to open my heart to you. To-day, however, I should be neglecting a duty if I hesitated any longer in pressing you not to deny us your presence on the occasion of our children's wedding. I know that you are not your own master, and that the future lies before you dark and misty. The shaping of it will, however, be simplified by the existence of certain fixed points, and we beg you to say for certain that you can spare a week for the children's wedding. Everyone must recognise that it is only natural. No great harm can come to your business by an absence of so few days, whereas a short interruption in your labours and preoccupations will refresh and strengthen you, in spirit no less than in body and mind.

As regards the difficult question of carrying on the Government, it does not seem to me that the position is much altered. It cannot

yet be said for certain that the King is so permanently prevented from governing in accordance with the Constitution as to make it necessary to legalise a Regency ; nevertheless, he is not now, and will not be for some months, able to govern in person. It will only be possible for the present to extend the provisional arrangements and there can be no important reason for hesitation in proclaiming it. I presume that you will decisively reject, as intolerable to the country and yourself, any suggestion of an ambiguous position for yourself, making you neither the King's *alter ego* and his servant nor Regent with plenary powers. If after a long period of trial it becomes clear that the King will not recover his mental powers, it may occur to him and his that the solution of the difficulty most advantageous to the Monarchy and the monarchical principle and most conducive of honour to the King himself will be abdication.

I beg for an answer to my question about your coming. A simple "yes" will be quite sufficient, and the one we shall most desire.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 29th Dec. 1857.—I seize the opportunity of the courier to thank you for the close argument which, in spite of your troubles, you have committed to paper. I am going through it point by point with Vicky, and we are discussing it together, and I think we all three agree fairly well about all your points. Your scheme of conduct in my opinion presents a most careful and exact survey, on which one who has to work on it may safely rely. The principles of strategy, on which your suggestions are based, must likewise be admitted to be sound and unshakeable. It is only in tactical movements that a certain amount of free choice must be allowed, for in this a satisfactory outcome depends on the skill of the person who has to act. This skill, again, is governed by his character and disposition, and the only genuine fruits come from what springs from this character and has grown together with it. This might lead to a discussion of the great theme, whether anything can be added to a man's nature, or whether only that which is in him already is capable of development. I observe daily in our more intimate relationships, that what is acquired merely lies sterile on the surface, and that most of the mistakes in our efforts to help others arise from our inability to transport ourselves into

their nature and individuality ; we cannot help referring to our own natures when we judge for and upon others.

When you are here I should like to go thoroughly into this subject with you, for in a right comprehension of it appears to me to lie the bridge between genius and the practical wisdom of life. A right combination of these two is the condition out of which great success in life emerges. We are delighted at the prospect of the great pleasure of seeing you again.

The Lavradios, who arrived here yesterday, brings us much news from Berlin. Nothing escapes him, for he is a keen enquirer and has knowledge of men. You are his guiding star in that heaven. He is much attached to the Prince, and both of them are very much pleased with his master's bride.¹

To Baron von Stockmar.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 25th Jan. 1858.—My heart impels me to send you a line to-day, as I cannot shake you by the hand. In a few hours our child will be a wedded wife ! a work in which you have had a large share, and, I know, will take a cordial interest. It is just eighteen years since you signed my marriage contract, and were present in the same Chapel Royal at my union with Victoria. Uncle Leopold, whom forty-two years ago you accompanied to London on the occasion of his marriage, will with myself be one of the bride's supporters. These reminiscences must excite a special feeling within you to-day, with which, I hope, is coupled the conviction, that we all gratefully revere in you a dear friend and wise counsellor. Your son will accompany Vicky ; my brother, who was my best man, will be present. We shall all miss you.

Our festivities and visits, which have almost knocked me up, have gone off extremely well, and without the smallest hitch. The Prussians seem to be greatly pleased and to have a high opinion of England. Bridegroom and bride are greatly moved, the interest shown by the public is lively and cordial.

4 p.m.—The ceremony is over. It was very imposing—all went well. The young people are now changing their dresses, and start

¹ Count de Lavradio, Minister since 1853 of King Pedro V of Portugal in London, came from Prince Charles Antony of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, whose daughter, Stephanie, had married the King in 1857. King Pedro died of cholera in 1861. She had died in 1859.

² See Martin, vol. iv, p. 164.

in half an hour for Windsor ; we are just going over to them. God blessing be upon them ! Do you say "Amen" ?

*To Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.*¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 30th Jan. 1858.—I have been unable find a quiet moment to write to you, and even now I must st^e from right and left. We had thirty-five Royal personages to hou. to fête, to show England to, to exhibit the bride to the people, society, &c., to receive the bridegroom, to marry the young peop to prepare their brief honeymoon at Windsor, to induct our son-i law into the Order of the Garter, to get back here, &c. To-day devoted to receiving addresses, and to a monster Drawing-room.

I am now a real father-in-law, our child a real wife. Th this looks somewhat strange to us you will comprehend ; not l will you feel that the separation for ever of our dear daught from the family circle makes a frightful gap in our hearts. I not trust myself to think of Tuesday, on which day we are lose her.

In Germany people seem prepared to welcome her with greatest friendliness ; here the love and the enthusiasm of the peo are not to be described : they are quite touching.

The marriage ceremony was very solemn and affecting. I se you a programme, and with it a piece of the wedding cake, and so orange-blossom from the bridal dress. . . .

It was eighteen years yesterday since I left my home, fourte since my dear father was taken from us !

*To Princess Victoria of Prussia, Princess Royal.*²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 3rd Feb. 1858.—My heart was very . when yesterday in the saloon you laid your head on my breast give free vent to your tears. I am not of a demonstrative natu and therefore you can hardly know how dear you have always b to me, and what a void you have left behind in my heart ; yet no my heart, for there assuredly you will abide henceforth, as till x you have done, but in my daily life, which is evermore reminc my heart of your absence.

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 166.

² *Ibid.*, p. 169.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 5th Feb. 1858.—Our darling child is now gone, and we have already news by telegraph from them as far as Cologne, where they made their entrance yesterday evening. The pang of parting was great on all sides, and the void which Vicky has left in our household and family circle will stand gaping for many a day. Throughout all this agitated, serious, and very trying time, the good child has behaved quite admirably, and to the mingled admiration and surprise of everyone. She was so natural, so child-like, so dignified and firm in her whole bearing and demeanour, that one might well believe in a higher inspiration.

Of the touching enthusiasm and sympathy of all ranks of the people you can form no conception. Down to the humblest cottage the marriage has been regarded as a family affair. *The Times* will have apprised you of the daily incidents ; I therefore speak to you only of impressions. I shall not forget that your son² has proved himself in all ways extremely useful, and takes and holds his ground, which, among the Berliners, is no easy matter.

In Paris things look bad. The outcry against England [on account of the Orsini affair³] is quite absurd, and begins to provoke excessive indignation here. The Government will, under the circumstances, have trouble in carrying through Parliament, which met yesterday, a suitable measure for the punishment of conspiracy to assassinate. The India Bill and Reform Bill together will give us a great deal to do all through this spring.

To the Princess Royal.⁴

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 6th Feb. 1858.—Thank God, everything seems to be going on splendidly, and you gain “golden opinions” in your favour ; which naturally gives us extreme pleasure, both because we love you, and because this touches our parental pride. — But what has given us most pleasure of all was the letter, so over-

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 170.

² Baron Ernest Stockmar, who was appointed Treasurer to the Princess Royal on her marriage.

³ The plot for an attack on the Emperor had been hatched in England, and an outcry arose in France with a demand that the British Government should be required to cease sheltering revolutionary refugees from other countries.

⁴ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 170.

flowing with affection, which you wrote while yet on board the yacht. Poor child ! well did I feel the bitterness of your sorrow, and would so fain have soothed it. But, excepting my own sorrow, I had nothing to give ; and that would only have had the effect of augmenting yours.

To the Same.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 11th Feb. 1858.—You have now entered upon your new home, and been received and welcomed on all sides with the greatest friendship and cordiality. This kindly and trustful advance of a whole nation towards an entire stranger must have kindled and confirmed within you the determination to show yourself in every way worthy of such feelings, and to reciprocate and requite them by the steadfast resolution to dedicate the whole energies of your life to this people of your new home. And you have received from Heaven the happy task of effecting this object by making your husband truly happy, and of doing him at the same time the best service, by aiding him to maintain and to increase the love of his countrymen.

That you have everywhere made so favourable an impression has given intense happiness to me as a father. Let me express my fullest admiration of the way in which, possessed exclusively by the duty which you had to fulfil, you have kept down and overcome your own little personal troubles, perhaps also many feelings of sorrow not yet healed. This is the way to success, and the *only* way. If you have succeeded in winning people's hearts by friendliness, simplicity, and courtesy, the secret lay in this, that you were not thinking of yourself. Hold fast this mystic power, it is a spark from Heaven.

To Him who has shaped everything so happily, I am grateful from the very depths of my soul for the happy climax to the most important period of your life. Dear child, I would fain have been in the crowd to see your entrance, and to hear what the multitude said of you ; so, too, is it with Mama. We are, however, kept admirably informed of everything by the telegraph, and post, and papers. The telegraph must have been amazed when it wrote : "The whole Royal family is enchanted with my wife.—F. W."

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 172.

Our old marriage day passed off yesterday quietly, but too much interrupted and overlaid with business of all sorts for calm enjoyment.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 15th Feb. 1858.—Your letter of the 5th gave me great pleasure. It is written with the old freshness and glow, and speaks of the old love and devotion. How could we, her parents, feel otherwise than proud and happy at the success which Vicky has won, by her simple, kindly demeanour, as well as by her tact! In that success we find some compensation for the bitter feeling of separation.

The enthusiasm with which she seems to have been everywhere received exceeds our utmost calculations and hopes, and proves that the people approved the idea of this alliance, and have found Vicky in herself answer to their expectations. It is only now, indeed, the difficulties of her life will begin, and after the excitement of the festivities a certain melancholy will come over the poor child, however happy she may feel with her husband. With marriage, a new life has opened for her, and you would have marvelled at the sudden change and development which even here became at once apparent.

We, that is, she and I, have, I think, remained, and I believe will remain, the same to one another. She continues to set great store by my advice and my confidence; I do not thrust them upon her, but I am always ready to give them. During this time of troubles she has written less to me, and communicated the details of her life, and what she is doing, more to her mother. I had arranged this with her, but I hold her promise to impart to me faithfully the progress of her inner life, and on the other hand have given her mine, to take a constantly active part in fostering it. You may be sure I will not fail in this, as I see in it merely the fulfilment of a sacred duty.

What you say about an early visit has already been running in my head, and I will frankly explain what we think on this subject. Victoria and I are both desirous to have a meeting with the young couple, somewhere or other in the course of the year, having more-

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 177.

over given them a promise that we would. This could only be in the autumn.

A *rendezvous* on the Rhine—for example at Coblenz—would probably be the right thing. . . . This does not exclude a flying visit by myself alone, which, if it is to be of any use, must be paid earlier in the year. I shall not be withheld from paying it by the fact that only with the greatest difficulty could I arrange to find the necessary time. I have considered how and where we could see each other, and am myself doubtful whether Berlin is the most appropriate place for me. I have therefore come to the conclusion that I might go to Coburg, and give the young people a *rendezvous* there. It is so long since I have been in the old house, that my heart and conscience urge me in this direction very strongly. I should be glad, too, to see you again, and to talk quietly with you. Vicky is very anxious to make acquaintance with my birthplace, and I should like to see it with her. I therefore think that this will be the best in every way. Let me have your opinion soon. I think you will concur in my plan. Now, however, I must conclude. . . .

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 17th February 1858.

DEAR COUSIN,—I cannot let the courier go without thanking you heartily for your long letter of the 13th. Everything has so far with God's help gone splendidly, and we cannot be grateful enough to Him. I now expect in the course of nature some slight reaction, which need not worry or annoy us. Just because they were so delighted, the public will begin to criticise. Following the excitement they, as well as the young people, will feel rather flat. The new and the old Fritz, and the new and the old Vicky will have to fight it out, and the old will prove not to be dead, and will have to be subdued, i.e. absorbed. They cannot be cast overboard at will or by external chance circumstances. We shall need much watchfulness, and indeed much foresight, in order not to disturb the process of absorption, nor by interference to reinforce the enemy in the course of being overthrown. I well understand your feelings, and the difficult task you must have had during the festivities as wife of the King's representative, and yet having no part in the representation.

Vicky is sure to feel lonely, especially if Fritz is much taken up by, or throws himself into, the military life of Potsdam. I do not consider this a bad thing, for it will enable her to collect herself, and from that will come the need to arrange her day and busy herself in the things of the mind and think over her new life. I trust that no one will try to keep up the excitement by means of distractions in order to disperse the depression, which is sure to set in, and which again is quite natural. Vicky's first duty is to observe, study, and find out all about the country, the people, and their conditions. She is intelligent enough for that, and will feel inclination to do so also. She must devote herself to her household affairs ; for this she has the main qualification—intelligence ; but the skill and inclination may be wanting. The first comes by practice, the second by conviction.

Her relations towards you and the dear cousin appear to be shaping themselves naturally and pleasantly, and I trust that they may be based on perfect frankness and considered fairness. The main thing is the coming devotion of the young couple to each other ; it is the root of their happiness, their existence. May the Almighty permit the plant to flourish !

Give my most friendly messages to the dear cousin. Your faithful cousin, and now almost brother, ALBERT.

To the Princess Royal.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 17th Feb. 1858.—Your time of gaiety, if not your honeymoon, comes to an end to-day ; and on this I take leave to congratulate you, unfeeling though it may sound, for I wish for you the necessary time and tranquillity to digest the many impressions you have received, and which otherwise, like a wild revel, first inflame and then stupefy, leaving a dull nerveless lassitude behind. Your exertions, and the demands which have been made upon you, have been quite immense ; you have done your best, and have won the hearts, or what is called the hearts, of all. In the nature of things we may now expect a little reaction. The public, just because it was rapturous and enthusiastic, will now become minutely critical, and take you to pieces anatomically. This is to be kept in view, although it need cause you no uneasiness, for you

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 175.

have only followed your natural bent, and have shown nothing to others which did not answer to the truth of your inner nature. It is only the man who presents an artificial demeanour to the world, who has to dread being unmasked.

. . . Your place is that of your husband's wife, and of your mother's daughter. You will desire nothing else, but you will also forgo nothing of that which you owe to your husband and to your mother. Ultimately your mind will, from the over-excitement, fall back to a little lassitude and sadness. But this will make you feel a craving for activity, and you have much to do, studying your new country, its tendencies and its people, and in overlooking your household as a good housewife with punctuality, method, and vigilant care. To success in the affairs of life, apportionment of time is essential, and I hope you will make this your *first* care, so that you may always have some time over for the fulfilment of every duty.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 24th February 1858.

DEAR SISTERLY COUSIN,—I have received your full letter of the 20th, which throws light on *l'état actuel* and studied it carefully. Your conversation with Vicky was both timely and right. Vicky will not let herself fail as regards foresight, for she has herself written on the subject to Victoria. Regarding the privileges and consideration due to the English princess, I have written to her to-day, and have said that the retention of her title is indispensable. I laid it down that "the English princess" was the correct term for the Prussian people. I also wrote about the Legation and the necessity of seeing them at mealtime. Thinking this was enough of a dose for one time, I was silent about dress at court (*Hofstaat*), as it seemed somewhat premature in these early days. I called the attention of both Vicky and Stockmar to the subject of systematic reading of the newspapers. Sense of order is where Vicky fails by her nature, and this must be specially inculcated, otherwise there will be waste of time, and important matters will be put off, and perhaps even forgotten. She knows its value, but though the spirit be willing the flesh is weak.

The terrible mass of business and claims on our time which overwhelm us at this most unpleasant and critical moment, must

excuse me for taking leave of you now. The Derby Cabinet¹ is to be completed to-day, and in two days the new people will take possession. The position *vis-à-vis de la France est très tendue*. In Paris they seem to wish to press us still further. Here the people's blood is up, and it will require great skill to steer between the two reefs.

To the Princess Royal.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 24th Feb. 1858.—A change has come over your paternal home, and you never find it quite the same as it was. What does not pass away, and is alone of value here below, is the old love and constancy of heart and mind ; these you will always find awaiting you, come when you may, though in truth they have gone with you to your far-off home, and surround you there too.

You are sure to succeed in bringing your life and thoughts into order, and in gaining the tranquillity that is essential for the health of your mind and soul.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

OSBORNE, 9th March 1858.

DEAR COUSIN,—Many thanks for your dear letter of the 6th, and for the copy of the Prussian Year-book for March.³ I shall keep it for future reference, though it must be a very incomplete account, seeing that Herr von Manteuffel has apparently chosen to abstract whole pages which do not please him. The article which you indicate shows that the enthusiasm was an enthusiasm of hope, and seeing that it includes outspoken references to the rise of Prussia, it is evident that the moral hopes, the satisfaction of which is the main task in front of the young couple, have been thrust into the foreground. God be thanked ! all is going splendidly, and all that you say is very fully corroborated by Lord Sydney and Lady Churchill, who arrived here at last yesterday. They were highly delighted with their expedition and grateful for all the kindness and friendliness shown them by the Prince and yourself. . . .

¹ Lord Palmerston's Government fell over the Conspiracy Bill, which was intended to conciliate French susceptibilities. It was felt that the Government were allowing the French to dictate our policy to us. Lord Derby's Ministry lasted until 10th June, 1859.

² See Martin, vol. iv, p. 176.

³ Describing the festivities on the arrival of Prince Frederick and the Princess Royal.

What you tell me about Fritz, and what his old tutor says about him, greatly interested me, but what a fresh proof that fear stands in the way of love, and that influence can only be exercised through love. I must urge you again to let the field lie quite fallow, and to refrain from cultivating it for some time to come, so that it may have rest. Fritz must learn not to identify you with criticism. You can say anything to Vicky and will be understood and as far as possible reinforced by her. It will be through her that he is served with all the advice that is necessary for him, in a form which will not close his heart against it. So much for the method. As regards the kind of advice, I beg you to stick to those very liberal principles which Churches and dogmatisers, as well as politicians, find it so hard to digest, just because they are in earnest about their cause, and serve it seriously and zealously. The main principle lies in the humble confession that—"Many roads lead to heaven," and not only the one in which we happen to believe. I mean that varieties of nature demand varieties of method. You will say—good; so long as our guidance leads thither and not into an abyss! The only possible answer is faith and trust in the wise dispensations of Providence, and recognition of a moral sense in those whose duty it is to act.

From all that Vicky writes we gather that nothing escapes her and that she has very correct ideas and sticks to them. The letters from them both show that they feel, read, talk, and work in common. There seems to be ample proof that his ideas are developing and strengthening in the right direction.

What his tutor says about the necessity of some definite and useful activity is quite true. Perpetual learning saps energy, and Fritz has arrived at an age when he ought to be at work, I mean, on something really useful. He feels this himself, for he spoke to me at Windsor about his desire to be drawn by his father more into active business. He was shy of suggesting it to him for fear of appearing ambitious or pushing. My idea at the time was that the Prince would be surrounding himself with loyal and eminent men, a course which I have often urged upon him. I thought that the suggestion to the father would come best from them, that he should of his own accord invite his son into the inner councils. Without something of the sort it seemed to me that he would be able to learn or do very little, as we could not assume that the Prince

would add to his many burdens that of teaching his son the art of government. It would not have done to make him a pupil or a handy man of Manteuffel's Ministry. Turn the idea over in your mind and tell me whether I should be doing good work by writing to the father. Or better still : talk it over yourself with him. After all, Fritz is your son, and ours also now in a kind of way.

I am becoming lengthy, and will stop. I have no time to mention political matters of this country. Finally, let us be grateful for all the good we are granted, and firm in the belief that the Lord will continue to aid us.

To the Princess Royal.¹

OSBORNE, 10th March 1858.— . . . You seem to have taken up your position . . . with much tact. . . . How I long to see you, and to hear from you those impressions which your first entrance from childhood into life, into that difficult struggle and severe school, must have made upon your heart and mind. To be deprived of every opportunity of watching that important process in a dear child's development, is indeed a great trial. The bandage has been torn from your eyes all at once as regards all the greatest mysteries of life, and you stand not only of a sudden before them, but are called upon to deal with them, and that too on the spur of the moment. "Oh ! It is indeed hard to be a human being," was the constant cry of the old Württemberg Minister von Wangenheim, and he was right !

To the Same.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 14th March 1858.—My whole stay in Coburg can only be for six days, but what delight will these six days be to me, after thirteen years' absence to be once more in my old home, and to see you again ! To think of seeing you and Fritz together in a quiet pleasant way, without visits of ceremony, &c. I dare not picture it to myself too strongly, and yet I must mention it now, if it is to be brought about at all. Talk it over with Fritz, and let me know if I can count on you, but do not let the plan get wind, otherwise people will be paying us visits, and our meeting will lose its pleasant private character.

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 208.

² *Ibid.*, p. 209.

Beatrice, on her first birthday, looks charming with a new light blue cap. Her table of birthday gifts has given her the greatest pleasure, especially the lamb.

To the Same.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 24th March 1858.—That you should sometimes be oppressed by homesickness is most natural. This feeling, which I know right well, will be sure to increase with the sadness which the reviving spring and the quickening of all nature that comes with it, always develop in the heart. It is a painful yearning, which may exist quite independently of, and simultaneously with, complete contentment and complete happiness. I explain this mental phenomenon, so hard to comprehend, thus. The identity of the individual is, so to speak, interrupted ; and a kind of dualism springs up by reason of this, that the old self, with all its impressions, remembrances, experiences, feelings, which were also those of youth, is attached to a particular spot, with its local and personal associations, and appears to what may be called *the new I* like a vestment of the soul which has been lost, from which nevertheless *the new I* cannot disconnect itself, because its identity is in fact continuous. Hence, the painful struggle, I might almost say, spasm of the soul.

I hope I have not grown too abstruse. Think, however, on what I have said ; perhaps you will extract something better from it.

To Baron von Stockmar.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 27th March 1858.—To-day we go to Windsor, where Bertie's Confirmation is to take place on Maundy Thursday.

I never remember to have had so much to do as I have had lately. The change of Government, the India Bill, the French difficulties, the educational requirements, &c., &c., have especially contributed to this. . . .

With France matters have once more been put upon a good footing. Her ruler, however, required the lesson. The loss of Persigny is a great loss for us ; still Pélissier will certainly do all in his power to uphold the alliance conscientiously. He comes after

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 209.

² *Ibid.*, p. 204.

Easter. His appointment is a deadly blow to Walewski, who had tripped up poor Persigny's heels, but with the view of appointing a creature of his own in his place. The Emperor, however, wishes to have a *personal* representative here.

Brunnow had reckoned upon Moustier from Berlin, whom he would have had in his pocket, and through him Walewski. Now he gets the Duke of Malakoff ! He has not yet been able to realise the position, and is by way of being extremely confidential ; it is he alone who has made Vicky's marriage popular in Berlin, where it was at first very unpopular, and he weeps tears of emotion when he speaks of her ! He was never finer !

To the Princess Royal.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 28th April 1858.—. . . What you are now living through, observing, and doing, are the most important experiences, impressions and acts of your life for they are the first of a life independent and responsible to itself. That outside of and in close proximity to your true and tranquillising happiness with dear Fritz your path of life is not wholly smooth, I regard as a most fortunate circumstance for you, inasmuch as it forces you to exercise and to strengthen the powers of your mind. Only keep a constant guard upon yourself and be not seduced by familiarity into approval of that which, while it was unfamiliar, the reason could not recognise as either right or suitable. This it is which constitutes the whole difference between a feeble soul and a strong one, that while the former suffers itself to be the slave of circumstances, the latter accommodates itself to them upon rational grounds and keeps its judgment unfettered.

I am delighted to see by your letter of the 24th, that you deliberate gravely upon your budget, and I will be most happy to look through it, if you send it to me ; this is the only way to have a clear idea to one's self of what one has, spends, and ought to spend. As this is a business of which I have had long and frequent experience, I will give you one rule for your guidance in it, viz. to set apart a considerable balance *pour l'imprévu*. This gentleman is the costliest of guests in life, and we shall look very blank if we have nothing to set before him. Therefore keep a large margin upon which you can

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 217.

draw for all that cannot be calculated beforehand, and reduce all the expenses capable of previous estimate courageously so low as to obtain for yourself a considerable margin. Fate, accident, time, and the world care very little for "a previous estimate," but ask for their due with rude impetuosity. Later retrenchments to meet them do not answer, because the demands of ordinary life have shaped themselves a good deal according to the estimates, and thus have acquired a legitimate power. . . .

We only rarely buy works of the Water Colour school for ourselves, but we have made presents to each other of the pictures. Thus the pleasure we take in them is doubled.

Memorandum.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 11th May 1858.—Lord Derby had an Audience at twelve o'clock. He said he had received a copy of Lord Ellenborough's letter, and had told him that should the Queen consult him (Lord Derby) he should advise her to accept the resignation. Lord Ellenborough had behaved in the handsomest manner, and expressed his belief that he had brought bad luck to the Government, for this was now the second difficulty into which they had got by his instrumentality, the first having been the Election Clause in the India Bill. Lord Derby hoped that this resignation would stop the vote of censure in the House of Commons, as the House could not hold responsible and punish the Cabinet for that with which they had had no concern. If the House persisted, it was clear that the motives were factious, and he hoped the Queen would allow him to threaten a Dissolution of Parliament, which he was certain would stop it. The Queen refused to give that permission;

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. iii, p. 359. Lord Canning, the Governor-General, had prepared a proclamation for promulgation in Oudh, announcing that, except in the case of certain loyal Rajahs, proprietary rights in the soil of the province would be confiscated. One copy of the draft was sent home, and another shown to Sir James Outram, Chief Commissioner of Oudh, and, in consequence of the latter's protest against its severity, as making confiscation the rule and not the exception, an exemption was inserted in favour of such landowners as should actively co-operate in restoring order. On receiving the draft in its unaltered form, Lord Ellenborough, the new President of the Board of Control, forwarded despatch to Lord Canning, strongly condemning his action, and, on the publication of this despatch, the Ministry narrowly escaped Parliamentary censure. Lord Ellenborough himself resigned, and was succeeded by Lord Stanley. Attempts had been made by both Lord Palmerston and Lord Derby to pass measures for the better government of India. After two Bills had been introduced and withdrawn, the procedure by resolution was resorted to, and a measure was ultimately passed transferring the Government of India to the Crown.

she said he might leave it quite undecided whether the Queen would grant a Dissolution or not, and take the benefit of the doubt in talking to others on the subject ; but she must be left quite free to act as she thought the good of the country might require at the time when the Government should have been beat ; there had been a Dissolution within the year, and if a Reform Bill was passed there must be another immediately upon it ; in the meantime most violent pledges would be taken as to Reform if a general election were to take place now. Lord Derby concurred in all this, and said he advised the threat particularly in order to render the reality unnecessary ; when she persisted in her refusal, however, on the ground that she could not threaten what she was not prepared to do, he appeared very much disappointed and mortified.

We then discussed the state of the question itself, and urged the necessity of something being done to do away with the injurious impression which the publication of the despatch must produce in India, as the resignation of Lord Ellenborough left this quite untouched, and Parliament might with justice demand this. He agreed, after much difficulty, to send a telegraphic despatch, which might overtake and mitigate the other. On my remark that the public were under the impression that there had been collusion, and that Mr. Bright had seen the despatch before he asked his question for its production, he denied this stoutly, but let us understand that Mr. Bright had known of the existence of such a despatch, and had wished to put his question before, but had been asked to defer it until Lord Canning's Proclamation should have appeared in the newspapers ! (This is nearly as bad !!) The Queen could not have pledged herself to dissolve Parliament in order to support such tricks ! ALBERT.

It was arranged that Lord Derby should accept Lord Ellenborough's resignation in the Queen's name.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 16th May 1858.

DEAR COUSIN,—I am most grateful for your long letter of the 3rd. All you say in it is a joy to my paternal heart. Vicky is devoted to you and the Prince, and clings to her husband with the warmest love. It does much honour to their intelligence and the honesty of their

aspirations that love does not blind them, as the ancients represented him as doing, and it shows also that they are not open to self-deception, which of all things on earth is the commonest failing and also the most dangerous. The greatest triumph in the whole matter is that you, so far as regards your son, can commit without fear into her hands the work that you have done in the past up till now. For you are no longer required to continue irritating him by your motherly watchfulness and advice, and you can give his spirit time and opportunity to develop the childlike love of which stands in need and is capable—and of which you also stand in need. You can obtain for yourself this blessing beyond value by constant self-control and trust in God.

I wrote the cousin a long letter on the 5th, passing in review conditions as they are in Europe and Prussia. I do not know if he has shown it to you. The main point in my opinion is free election in the autumn.

I can hardly preach just now much in favour of constitutionalism for at this moment we here are not showing a very good example of it. Derby's carelessness, his colleagues' incompetence, and more particularly Lord Ellenborough's failure to appreciate the situation in India have plunged us into great embarrassment politically, whilst on the other hand Lord Palmerston's waning popularity, his bad relations with Lord John Russell, the useless self-isolation of the Peelites (which has put them out of gear with everything), and the intrigues of the Radicals who are playing under the rose with the Tory leaders, make it almost impossible for us to free ourselves from our embarrassments. In two days' time the Debate about Lord Canning will be over. No one can say yet what will come of it. I was afraid of one thing, and that was that my visit to Coburg would have to be given up, but I do not despair of it so far. I have written to-day, as I do not know if I shall otherwise find time to do so, but I am leaving my letter open till Wednesday for the Messenger. One more word to touch on the pleasant impression that your ward Stephanie [of Hohenzollern] made on us. She is a charming creature, whom Heaven will surely protect. We are sincerely sorry for the poor father for having to lose his jewel. Unfortunately the voyage has been a bad one. We have heard by telegraph from the ship in Corunna harbour, where she was forced to put in.

What terrible news from Richmond !

19th May.—How little I thought, when I left it open, that I should have to continue my letter on black-edged paper. You will be terribly sorry about poor Helen,¹ who was like a sister to you. Victoria sent yesterday for the doctor's report, to which I have nothing to add. The feeble body succumbed to the fever of the influenza, and yet her mind and spirit remained fresh. She was spared the pain of taking leave of her children, which would have been terrible to her, for she lived for them alone. She had kept herself up and forced her body to go on living in order to bring them up sound and vigorous young people. I do not know what will become of them or how their mother is to be replaced. There they are alone with the corpse of their beloved mother. Robert is still very ill with the fever, which the mother caught when she was nursing him. [The Comte de] Paris is beginning to cough violently and has the illness in him. They are both devoted, but very much depressed. I saw them yesterday, and we mean to visit them to-day. I saw poor Helen's body. Her features were calm and as though living, and the paleness of death gave her an appearance almost purer than in the last years of her life. She had in her last hours been able to take considerable nourishment—soup, wine, &c., &c., in order to keep up the sinking pulse, and she smiled and said, “You want to make me drunk.” She was astonished at seeing the doctors in her room in the night and asked whether the reason for it was that her condition was serious. The doctors avoided answering her question, and said that the point was to know how she was feeling. She replied that she did not feel very ill, but she wanted rest and sleep. Then she turned over to get to sleep, and the doctors retired to a corner of the room, whilst two nurses sat down by the bed. And yet she expired without any of them being aware of it. They had not even time to summon her sons to their mother's death-bed.

I write you all these painful details, as I know from bitter experience how one longs for them when one is far away. Yesterday nothing was known of Helen's last wishes. The Queen and Nemours will certainly be the guardians, but the poor Queen is herself ill in bed with fever at Claremont. Their duties will not be for long, for Paris comes of age in a year from now.

¹ Duchess Helène of Orleans (*née* Mecklenburg-Schwerin), widow of Ferdinand, Duke of Orleans, died on 18th May, 1858, at Cranbourne House, Richmond. Her sons were the Comte de Paris and Robert, Duc de Chartres.

*To Baron von Stockmar.*¹

OSBORNE, 25th May 1858.—I have just heard that now Vicky will in all probability, not be able to come to Coburg. Should this turn out to be the case, I shall be deprived of a great pleasure. As I start two evenings hence, and calculate on being at Coburg on the 29th, I must, in that untoward case, try to adopt your original plan, and to cut down my stay in Coburg from five days to three, so as to have two to spare for Babelsberg, on which I must then make a sudden descent and take them by surprise. To do this with effect, however, no hint of my intention must reach them beforehand.

To an early happy meeting !

*To Queen Victoria.*²

COBURG, 29th May 1858.

DEAR CHILD,—I write to you, just before going to sleep, from the Palace of Coburg. I have this moment returned from the theatre, where Ernest's *Santa Chiara* was very well given, and there I struggled manfully to keep drowsiness at bay. Now my eyes, however, are greatly minded to close ! Ernest met me at Füllbach. I found Alexandrine [Duchess of Coburg] and Ernest Württemberg here, the latter looking very well, with a long beard and moustache.

We had dinner at half-past three *en petit comité*. This over, I walked with Ernest and Alexandrine in the Hofgarten, and from there to the Festung, which is now united with the garden in one park, laid out most successfully in a way that does Ernest the greatest credit. After we came down again, past the large Catholic church, —which Augustus, the Pope, and all manner of bishops and pious souls are erecting upon the terrace of the Hofgarten, right in front of the Palace,—I went with Ernest to Stockmar, who had just come in from a long walk. He looked extremely well, walked briskly, and spoke with cheerfulness and vigour, which was a great pleasure to me. Then it was time to dress for the theatre. I had made good resolutions in my own mind against going, but these I found give way. Ah me ! On the whole, the impression on my mind is one of pro-

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 235.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 236 *et seq.*

found sadness ! I have become an utter stranger here, and know scarcely any one, while those I used to know have aged so much that I find it hard to puzzle out the old faces again. . . .

Young Stockmar is here, sent by Vicky with a letter to me, expressing her regrets in the most doleful tones ! When she wrote, she had not received my letter holding out the prospect of a visit to Babelsberg ; I have heard from her since in raptures.

Ernest received my letter of the 25th only this morning, and so knew nothing about my plans. I am living in Mama's rooms.

To the Same.

COBURG, 30th May 1858.—You will have received my telegraphic despatch of this morning ; nevertheless I will continue my evening report. We went to the Palace, where a mediocre sermon and a fine full chanting of chorales, combined with the impressions of bygone days, constituted my devotions. A number of children were confirmed on the same spot where Ernest and myself pronounced our confession of faith. After church Stockmar came to me, and remained for an hour and a half. . . . After this I went with Ernest and Alexandrine to the new burial-ground and the mausoleum, which is indeed very beautiful and appropriate ; then to the Museum, where I once more hailed with delight all the birds, butterflies, stones, and shells, and called to mind every circumstance connected with their acquisition ; thence to a magnificent new brewery, opposite the meadow in the direction of the new railway station, which has been placed between the brewery and Ernest Württemberg's garden, and so up to Ernest Württemberg's. We did not find him at home, but we saw the familiar beautiful view. Thence to the new barracks, and so home. Here I received before dinner the deputation of the magistracy. The dinner was in the throne-room, and we went straight from it to the opera, *La Sonnambula*.

I got up with a headache and general *malaise*, and have kept these two uninvited guests with me till now. I have eaten nothing all the day, to rob my stomach of the shadow of a pretext for behaving ill. I will now take " a draught " and go to bed, but not without first wishing you " Good-night ! " There goes the watchman's horn, a proof that he still exists, of which we recently expressed our doubts at Osborne. Mention this to Mama.

To the Same.

COBURG, 31st May 1858.

DEAR WIFE,—I cannot let the day close without writing you a word. The telegram about Indian affairs has caused me much anxiety. Things are in anything but a good position, and Adrian Hope is a great loss ; neither can I hear without regret of failures with 100 killed.¹ Pray let poor Lady Peel know how deeply I sympathise with her in her loss. That he should fall a victim to the smallpox, that brave Sir William, was indeed too sad. . . .²

The Rosenau was truly lovely to-day, though it rained now and then, and the Festung has become a most interesting museum. I plucked flowers for you at the Rosenau, which, however, wait for the courier, who had not arrived up to eleven this evening. I must to bed. My fasting-cure of yesterday has done me good, and I am all right again to-day. Good-night, my love.

To the Same.

COBURG, 1st June 1858.

DEAR CHILD,—At last I receive a few lines from you. The courier arrived before we started for the Kalenberg, where we spent the day under scorching heat. I have just returned from the theatre, where we saw the *Graf von Schwerin*, a piece by young Herr von Meyern (Ernest's secretary, whose brother is in India). It was very well acted—a Ritter-Drama, full of political allusions to Denmark, Germany, and Holstein, which were received by the audience with great cheering. . . .

The Kalenberg has become very beautiful ; Ernest has almost entirely rebuilt it. We did not fail to visit, among other things, Arthur [Mensdorff's] queer tower. . . .

¹ The Prince here alludes to a repulse of a body of infantry in an advance which had been ordered (14th April), without first taking a proper *reconnaissance*, by General Walpole, against a fort in the occupation of Nurput Singh, one of the Oudh chiefs. In this ill-advised affair Brigadier the Hon. Adrian Hope, of the 93rd Highlanders, one of the ablest and most popular of the officers whom the campaigns in the Crimea and in India had brought into prominence, was killed. The heavy loss sustained in this incautious advance seemed the more lamentable when it was found next morning that the enemy had evacuated the fort overnight.

² Captain Sir William Peel, K.C.B., was the third, and, it was said at the time, the favourite son of the late Sir Robert Peel. He died of smallpox on the 27th April at Cawnpore, aged thirty-three. On the 30th May the Queen wrote to Lord Derby : "The news from India are not cheering. The death of Sir William Peel, one of the brightest ornaments of the navy, has caused the Queen the deepest concern."

Well, I have not thanked you as I ought for your dear words. I am glad you have gone to Alverbank¹ and enjoyed your visit. Tell Affie² that he is much talked about here, and that the people have taken a great fancy to him. . . .

We are to be stirring by seven, so I must stop, for it is late.

Thank Mama and the children for their letters, and give them some of the pansies which go to you in a tin case. They are from the terrace at the Rosenau under your windows. The cowslips I gathered at the Schweizerei. Make tea of them, in honour of me, and let Bertie have some. Good night.

To the Same.

GOTHA, 2nd June.—I will not let the day close without writing you a line. We left Coburg this morning about seven, in the midst of a violent storm, which had ceased by the time we reached the Rosenau, and drove up the Fischbacher Pass. By one we reached Oberhof. . . . After breakfasting there we drove to Reinhardtsbrunn. The heat was insufferable. . . . Reinhardtsbrunn was wonderfully beautiful. Ernest has built much and well. The church has been freshly done up. We reached Friedrichsthal about half-past six. Mama (Dowager Duchess of Coburg) was very affectionate, but she has grown very old, and begins to resemble our late Grandmama. We dined with her *à trois*.

Now I am going to bed tired. God bless you !

BABELSBERG, 4th June 1858.

DEAR WIFE,—Your letters reached me to-day by the Berlin messenger. My hearty thanks for them ! Fritz met me this morning at Grossbeerden, and about nine I reached Babelsberg, where Vicky and the Prince received me. . . . The relation between the young people is all that can be desired. . . . I have had long talks with them both, singly and together, which gave me the greatest satisfaction.

Fritz Karl paid me a visit before dinner (about two o'clock) and tall Albert (*fils*) after dinner. The King and the Queen, with the

¹ The cottage opposite to the Isle of Wight, where Prince Alfred was at this time pursuing his studies for the navy.

² Prince Alfred was heir to Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

Prince and Princess, came about half-past seven. The King is uniform, with helmet and sword.

5th June.—I got so far before going to sleep yesterday ; I will now resume. The King looks frightfully ill ; he was very cordial and friendly, and for the half-hour he stayed with us, did not once get confused, but complained greatly about his state of health. He is thin and fallen away over his whole body, with a large stomach, his face grown quite small. He made many attempts at joking in the old way, but with a voice quite broken, and features full of pain “ When I am going about again,” he said, grasping his forehead, and striking it, “ then the Queen must pay us a visit here, it will make me so happy.” What he meant was, “ When I am well again.” “ I is so tedious,” he murmured ; thus it is plainly to be seen that he has not quite given up all thought of getting better. The Prince’s whole aim is to be serviceable to his brother. He still walks very lame, but looks well. I kept quietly in the house all day with Vicky who is very sensible and good, and in the evening drove with he and Fritz through Potsdam, Charlottenhof, and Sans Souci, to pay a return visit to the King, who, however, had not come back from his drive. In the evening, about nine, we had tea upon the terrace with curdled milk. The evening was glorious. We separate about ten.

I will now dress. Breakfast is about nine ; and about ten I drive to town with Fritz to see his house, and back to dinner at two. therefore stop. The messenger, who starts to-day, will take the letter with him. It will probably be the last, as, even if I write to-morrow, I shall arrive before my letter. I have fixed to take or leave to-morrow evening. Consequently by late on Monday night I shall probably be with you again. You may believe how heartily glad the thought of this makes me. Meanwhile good-bye.

To Baron von Stockmar.

BABELSBERG, *6th June 1858.*—I have been much gratified by my visit here ; the harmony between the young couple is perfect. I am well, and resume my journey this evening, after an, alas ! too brief stay. The Prince I found cheerful, but the King is a sad spectacle and physically much altered. During the half-hour I was with him he was not confused, but like a man just out of sleep.

To the Princess Royal.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 23rd June 1858.—Uncle Leopold and his children are well, bright, and active, Marie sweet as ever, Philippe developing daily, Leopold also greatly improved. . . .

I suppose I may now assume that I have every chance of becoming at 39 a venerable grandpapa. This will give to the coming grey hairs in my whiskers a certain significance, which they have hitherto lacked. . . . *

To Prince William of Prussia.

OSBORNE, 14th July 1858.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—The courier who has just come confirms us in our decision, which we telegraphed to you yesterday, to make Babelsberg our meeting-point. We came to it by a process of elimination—which is also used in mathematics in arriving at a result when there are too many unknown quantities preventing the use of a more direct method. It has the disadvantage of being a slow one, but as it is sure, one is not badly off in the end. Let me then fix our arrival officially for 12th August (on which day grouse-shooting starts—but this year that does not interest us). Victoria has forwarded to the Princess the list of our suite, which we have kept as short as possible. Nevertheless, its length appals me, when I think of the places where we shall be staying. But we are all people who are very easily pleased, and beg to be treated as such. The visit will have to bear a private, semi-incognito character, and Victoria is going to indicate this to the Queen.

The idea of coming in September would bring it too close to the critical moment when Prussia's fate and your future position are to be decided. Everyone in Europe feels that the first depends on the second, and is waiting anxiously to hear what line you will follow. I imagine that you have thought out your plans and taken counsel with your friends as to the measures you will adopt, supposing that you are obliged to undertake the Regency in full. For when the moment comes, there will be little time or leisure for making plans, and it may be difficult to ask the advice of third persons without prejudicing your decisions.

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 258. The King of Belgium was over in England on a visit.

They talk of a change of system, and enjoy using the word, which sounds big, but may mean much or nothing. I attach no importance to that, but I do attach importance to substituting honest men, whom the nation know to be honest, for personages whom the world suspects, and who have earned the scorn of great and small. General Espinasse's¹ dismissal has done more in these last weeks for the Emperor Napoleon than a hundred measures, speeches and proclamations, and if he could only manage to gather honest men around him as Ministers, it would do the Empire more good than any amount of repressive laws and army increases. There are two schools of politicians : those who say "measures not men," and those who say "men not measures." Neither is absolutely right or wrong, and in either case all depends on whether the State is sick in spite of skilful leadership, or whether the State, normally strong, is growing, despite its own innate soundness, ill and uncomfortable owing to the unsoundness of its governing class. There is no idea of this last-mentioned feeling in the Prussian State.

Our Parliament is approaching the end of the Session, and the Ministry has held together for a wonder. This is because no one wishes the "two dowager Premiers" (as people in joke now call Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell) to return to power.

To the Princess Royal.²

OSBORNE, 1st Sept. 1858.—. . . There is much truth in the simile of the stone that is cast into the water : it makes a great splash, and the waves swell out into rings, but the rings widen and widen, flatten and flatten, until at last the surface of the water is again smooth as a mirror, and as though the stone were not lying beneath it ; it remains, however, at the bottom. I know not whether the thought is my own, or whether I have somewhere read or heard it ; it expresses, however, what I feel and have often felt (in connection with the remembrance, of the days in Babelsberg). Osborne is

¹ The Prince had written to the Princess Royal on 23rd June : The Duc de Malakoff was greatly delighted at the removal of General Espinasse and the Ministère de Séreté Publique, and called it "*une espèce de croquemitaine pour effrayer les enfants qui n'était plus de nos jours.*" In reference to the general himself he said to your mother : "*Je n'aime pas les gens qui ont le front fuyant devant et la tête toute pointue derrière ; cela tient plus de l'ecureuil et du lièvre que de l'homme. Eh bien, c'est un peu Espinasse !*" he added, making as he spoke the drollest and most impossible grimace.

² See Martin, vol. iv, p. 302.

green and beautiful, but the weather cold and stormy. Mama will be much hurt when she gets up and finds that I have had a fire lit. I am writing to you, you see, in the "golden morning hour!"

. . . Alfred looks very nice and handsome in his midshipman's, or rather, naval cadet's uniform, the round jacket and the long-tailed coat with the broad knife by his side.

To the Duchess of Kent at Abergeldie Castle.¹

3rd Sept. 1858.—I must write you to-day just two words of thanks for your lovely presents, which came only yesterday into my hands at the after-distribution of birthday gifts which Victoria contrived and arranged here. . . . The children recited their poems, and played their pieces of music, and exhibited their works of art and science, all extremely good. I have been especially gratified, however, by Alfred's success at the severe three days' examination.

It is now settled that we go to you on Monday. . . . We hope to pass your windows on the 8th. I am heartily glad at the thought of our meeting. Till then, farewell! Ever your faithful son,
ALBERT.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

BALMORAL, 28th September 1858.

DEAR COUSIN,—Although birthday congratulations are all much the same, and as one gets older one looks forward less eagerly to them, the need to express them is still a need of the heart, and the receipt of them brings hearts closer together. I beg you to accept my good wishes as coming from an affectionate heart. Your happiness is so much bound up with the joint happiness of our children, that my good wishes rest on a broad and safe basis of selfishness. We have very good news of the children. Vicky has borne very well the separation at the call of military duty. We have heard nothing from the Prince about the great events that are going on in Berlin, and from the children not a syllable—probably because they have nothing to tell—but through diplomatic channels we hear that the Prince is firmly resisting all attempts to get a solution otherwise than by a legalised Regency, and that his opponents have realised the impossibility of forcing him out of his legal status. We gather that the

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 303.

King is mentally no better, and that the Queen is having a hard time of it.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

BALMORAL, 12th Oct. 1858.—. . . The idea that Uncle Leopold is at work upon an alliance between England, Prussia, and Austria against him has for a long time taken entire possession of Louis Napoleon's mind, and originates no doubt in the feeling that, if he prosecutes an alliance with Russia, this dreaded combination would be formed from an instinct of self-defence and might more than counterpoise the Russian alliance. We are, in fact, on a more friendly footing with Austria than we have been for a long time, simply from the fact, that the latter, in the consciousness of her own weakness, shut up as she is between the hostile powers of France and Russia, feels the necessity for attaching herself to England, and for sacrificing to that object some harmless prejudices.

We had the Count and Countess de Persigny here for four days. He is still the only true soul the Emperor has, but speaks with great frankness of his master, whose faults make him extremely unhappy, and with whom the party now in power denigrate him daily.

Philip of Flanders, who was here for ten days, but unluckily brought down only two stags, pleases me more and more every time I see him.

Memorandum.²

BALMORAL, 16th Oct. 1858.—The appeal in favour of "long-established rules" would have come with more effect if the years 1857 and 1858 had not given us melancholy proof of the result of the system on which the local Indian army had been governed by the East India Company.

Instead of the proper "chain of responsibility" which is claimed

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 319.

² See Martin, vol. iv, p. 310. When the Crown took over the Government of India from the East India Company, the Directors endeavoured to retain some control over the military forces of India and embodied their views in an elaborate Memorandum, submitted to the Queen, in which the expediency was maintained of leaving the Indian Council to act upon "the long-established rules" of their predecessors at the India House. The issues at stake were felt by the Queen and Prince to be of Imperial importance, and their views in answer to this document were accordingly embodied by the Prince in the Memorandum given above.

for the system, it would seem more correct to characterise the system as one of perpetual counteraction and conflicting authorities.

Can anything be more monstrous, for instance, from a military point of view, than the relative positions of the Commander-in-Chief for India and the Commanders-in-Chief for Madras and Bombay ; that the latter should be perfectly independent of the former in their respective Presidencies as regards the Company's, or local, forces, but subordinate to him as regards those of Her Majesty ? And that the former, in the event of military operations near the frontiers of the different Presidencies, should be absolutely powerless to combine his operations, as far as the co-operation of local troops is concerned beyond the limits of Bengal, without the concurrence, previously obtained, of the Governor in Council and Commanders-in-Chief of the subordinate Presidency ? Such an arrangement seems only to equal, in injury to the public service, those under which rates of pay, conditions of service, respect to caste, and the military system generally, as regard the Native troops, have varied in the different Presidencies.

The great principles on which the efficiency of the military force in any country, and under any circumstances, must depend, are, *simplicity, unity, and steadiness of system, and unity of command.*

We have hitherto had in India, not only a different system for each Presidency, and independent, or nearly independent command in each, but in each of these three independent armies, four independent kinds of force—the Queen's European, the Company's European, the regular Native, and the irregular Native armies ! Under this state of things the result has been the mutiny of the whole of the Native army in one Presidency, and a state of discipline in the local European troops characterised as disgraceful by some of the most competent judges on the spot, and nothing but jealousy and animosity between the different services.

The Queen's troops have alone, after being some years in the country, preserved an efficient discipline—and over them the authority of the Commander-in-Chief extended throughout India—while he was controlled by the Commander-in-Chief at home, acting under the immediate authority of the Crown.

Here is the true “chain of responsibility,” and it has to be shown that inconvenience has arisen to the service in India from that chain of responsibility, as regards the discipline and efficiency

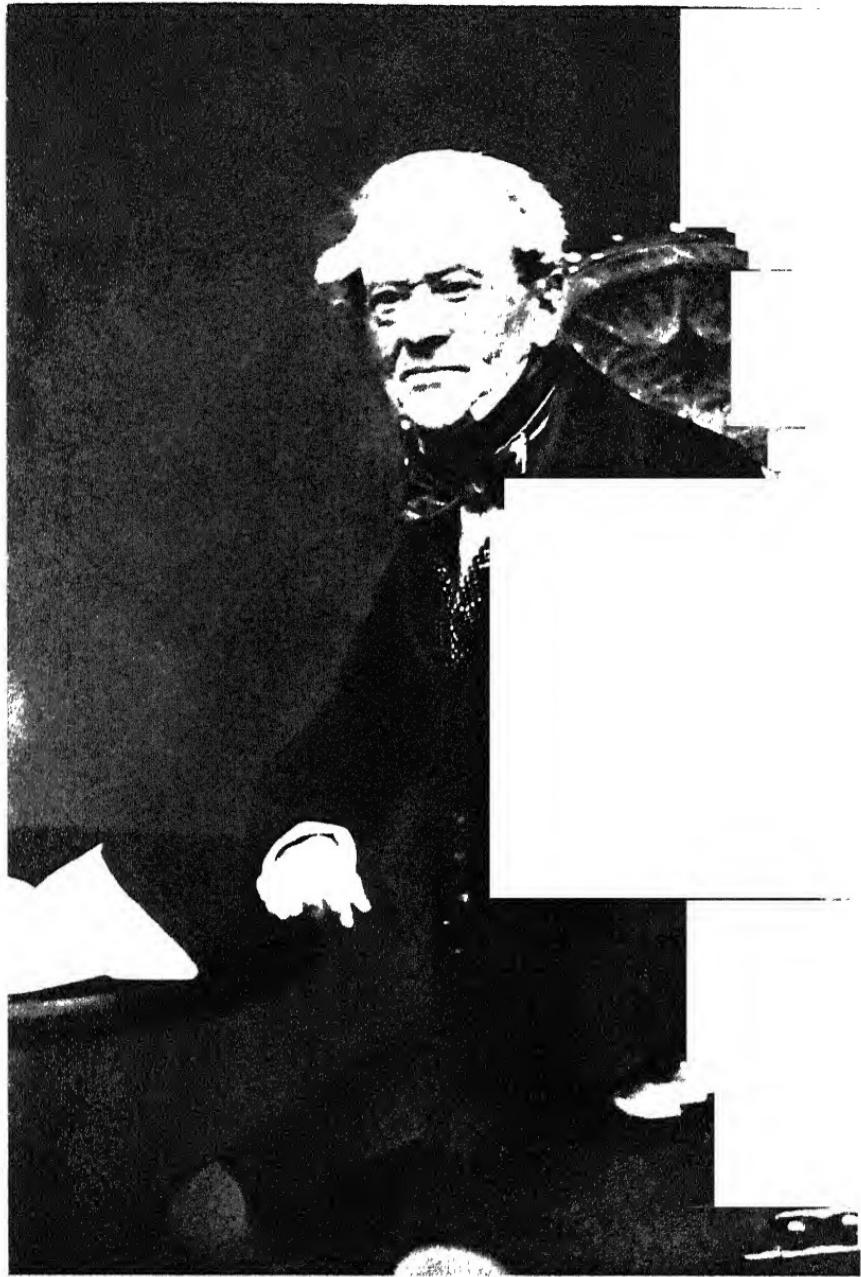
of the troops, being thus preserved in the legitimate and constitutional line, traced back to the Sovereign. Has the Governor-General or Indian Commander-in-Chief been less free to move and employ Her Majesty's troops, as the exigencies of the Indian service required, than those of the East India Company?—or have they been found wanting at any time when the others have broken down? The events of the last two years, during which the *sole* dependence has been upon Her Majesty's troops, is the answer to these questions.

The course, then, prescribed by common sense, in considering the future organisation of an army in India, would appear to be: To abandon "the long-established rules," which, in the case of the Native troops, have resulted in universal mutiny throughout Bengal, and, in that of the Company's European troops, in indiscipline and shortness of numbers (for amongst other faults of the old system is that of never having been able to keep the European forces of the Company nearly up to their establishment), and to adopt that system which has been most successful hitherto in maintaining an efficient force, that, namely, under which Her Majesty's regular forces have been governed.

To the Prince Regent of Prussia.

BALMORAL, 18th October 1858.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I know you have at this moment more than usual to do, and ought not to be pestered with letters. But I cannot refrain from wishing you, in just a couple of lines, joy with all my heart at the complete solution of the Regency question. The purely negative position which you took up proved sufficient, as I always expected it would do, to bring about this solution, in accordance at once with your own wishes, with the letter of the law, and with the country's choice. None the less, however, do I feel bound to acknowledge with admiration the exemplary behaviour of the Prussian people, showing as it did, sympathy with the melancholy condition of their Sovereign, attachment to his house, firm confidence in yourself, and, as a consequence of these things, great composure in bearing with the frequently arbitrary measures, which they felt to be hostile to their most sacred interests. God grant you may succeed despite the many personal difficulties by which you will be beset in proving yourself true to the confidence shown you. . . .



Baron Stockmar

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

BALMORAL, 18th October, 1858.

DEAR COUSIN,—I am using the courier to discuss with you the subject touched on in your letter to Stockmar. I should like to separate that which has been attained from that which has not been attained. For only by realising the first can we find the right key in which to judge the second.

That which has been attained seems to me an essential for the course of Prussia's development. In face of the opposition of the King, the Queen, the Court, the Ministry, and the Kreuz Party, and without coming into personal conflict with anyone or offering the world the spectacle of a family quarrel or becoming the tool of the opposition, the Prince has succeeded in establishing the Regency in the full meaning of the word and in basing it on the Constitution. Thus the Constitution is recognised in practice, and it could hardly have been made a living entity, in consonance with the Constitution as it is, in any other way. The Regent stands on firm constitutional ground. His first duty is to dismiss the Minister who refused to admit this fact, and to summon the Chambers. The fact that the Prince still retains Manteuffel and his colleagues in power, and, from a supposed sense of duty, does not think that he ought to dismiss them, makes me somewhat anxious. But as regards retention of Manteuffel, it must, as Fritz writes to me, be admitted that the Prince thinks that he is acting in the spirit of the Constitution in permitting the Ministry, which was responsible for the Regency, to bring it before the Chambers. The German Liberal papers even argue that this interpretation of the Constitution is the correct one.

Our anxieties then should be concerned solely with the Prince's intentions for the future. His hesitations are certainly disadvantageous, yet his decisions will have to be governed by events in the near future. These are the Speech to the Chambers now assembling, the expression of the feelings of the public in the Elections, and the hope of finding honest men, ready to serve with Manteuffel, in place of those with whom the Prince finds government impossible. As regards the Elections, Flottwell's appointment is a guarantee that the Ministry of the Interior will ensure free expression of public opinion, and this may be counted as a clear gain for improved conditions in future.

Uncle Leopold's advice, gloomy though it is, does not surprise me at all. On general principles he is in favour of keeping the so-called Conservative parties in power in his own country and elsewhere. If he had not kept Guizot in power in opposition to us with his father-in-law [Louis Philippe] (in spite of the fact that he was shamefully duped by Guizot in the matter of the Spanish Marriages), King Louis Philippe might perhaps still be sitting on the throne of France. The principle is so deeply rooted in him that no arguing can shake it. In the case that I mention the Uncle's words may have influenced the decision more than he really intended them to do.

I fear that my ideas may displease you on the ground of their being too general, and yet what we may expect from the future depends on two factors alone—the men, who are not to be changed, and the general circumstances that I have suggested. We must trust in God to mediate for us.

I wish you happiness for this day¹ with all my heart. Ever your faithful cousin, ALBERT.

To the Prince Regent of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 17th November 1858.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I must send one word by Bertie to you to commend him to the care of yourself and the dear cousin. We beg you to treat him, not as a foreign prince of rank, but simply as a young relation, and keep all ceremonial away from him. Vicky will be very glad to have him with her on her birthday. She is actually 18 years old ! A great age ! From every side we hear only praise of you, and I trust the success in the Elections will justify your faith in the nation.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 22nd December 1858.

DEAR COUSIN,—I am most grateful to you for the proof of friendship which we have again received in the long letter in which you record the result of your observation of Bertie. I think that your judgment of him is very correct, although I consider that you have set the social demands rather too high. On this point I find a difference in principle between the Weimar and Coburg schools,

¹ Prince Frederick William's birthday.

of which I had experience as a child, when I myself was being educated. The ideal that you demand from a young man is undoubtedly noble, good, and most correct, yet I am pleased that it should not be enforced if the inner urge towards it does not exist, for it is a proof of mental honesty if a young man shrinks from earning by his outward behaviour the rewards for an interest that he does not genuinely feel, and is conscious of not feeling. In this children have a better instinct than their teachers, and the fear that their weaknesses will soon come to light helps them towards a sound instinct of self-preservation in their shyness and timidity. Still, it is much to be regretted that there is this lack of interest. In Bertie it goes astonishingly deep, and hangs together with his want of knowledge, for in most things he is noticeably backward, and the lack of development, which physically is visible in him, is even greater on the mental side. For all this, he has a keen understanding, and great power of observation. I think that his stay in Berlin will be of real use to him, and we are most grateful to you both for the love and care with which you have striven to make him useful. I again recognise your instinct to promote all that is good, and admire your ardour. Fritz also has taken a lot of trouble, thereby furnishing proof of his own mental growth. I can read this between the lines in his letters.

To the Prince Regent of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 22nd December 1858.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—Accept my most hearty thanks for the kind letter which Bertie brought me. He has come back very well, and very greatly pleased with his visit to Berlin; I need scarcely add very grateful also for all the kindness and generosity shown him. Our parental hearts are not less full of acknowledgment; and I ask leave to express to you our special gratitude for the Order of the Black Eagle conferred upon Bertie, of which we trust he will at all times prove himself not unworthy.

I am delighted that you have in your letter given me an opportunity of casting a glance over the new phase of your political position. Assuredly the coming Session will not be an easy one, seeing that after a long period of repression an outlet has been suddenly given to the free voices of the people. Meanwhile, looking at the matter broadly—taking this repression, and this sudden emancipation from

it, into account—I cannot but admire the power of self-command which the nation has hitherto shown. If some extravagant demands or even absurdities should crop up in the new Diet, this, I hope, will neither alienate nor alarm you, nor lead you to adopt a hostile attitude in defence. In any case it is a free assembly of several hundred men, who will represent as nearly as may be those interests and feelings of the most diverse kinds, which form the motive springs of the kingdom as a whole. It is in this diversity of interests and feelings, and in their mutual action one upon another, that the life and well-being of the community and the State lie, and from it spring, as in the organic world, vital power and the capacity of growth. The Regent's position is that of moderator, and your readiness to use it everywhere with firmness will be of essential service to the general weal.

There will not be wanting some who, if this political life should become too animated, may find a malicious pleasure in pointing to this circumstance as a proof that the measures of repression formerly practised, and often illegally, by themselves, were not so bad after all, and that you are now reaping the fruits of your own presumption. Nevertheless, this would be about as wise as to chuckle with satisfaction because a horse is restive, and its restiveness is troublesome to its rider, and at the same time to recommend him, instead of mounting his steed in knightly fashion, to remain sitting on a hobby-horse of wood. To control people of this stamp you will want neither justification nor excuse ; for you have only fulfilled your duty as a subject, as a prince, and as a man of honour. The Constitution, to which you have sworn your allegiance, was not granted by you, but it is derived directly from those who will perhaps make it a matter of reproach to you that you have carried it out. Neither was it granted in haste, but as a retrograde step from the reaction which succeeded the outrageous outbreak of 1848, which outbreak again was directly caused by the King going back from his previous promises and assurances ; and if we would trace to its source the sound principle—nay, the duty which is your rule of action—we have only to remember the sacred promises which the Prussian Crown made to its people, when it summoned them to the struggle for freedom against the French oppressor, and of which it made renewed professions when peace had been secured. No man capable of taking a clear survey of the past will see a Jacobin in

complaints of the restraints which it imposes on him. Now he has got Russia . . . and is longing for revenge against Europe. He thinks himself safe in this alliance, and therefore comes forward with his schemes. . . . Nothing will arrest him but uncertainty about England and fear of Germany. . . .

I need not tell you that I do not get up a Prusso-Austrian alliance. These Powers themselves generally know pretty well where their interest lies. Of my brother I have heard nothing of late, and believe him absorbed by a new Opera which he has just brought out.

To the Prince Regent of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 26th January 1859.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I write to-day to beg you to recommend your Foreign Office to exercise great care with regard to communications from England. The very confidential communication which you had made through Lord Bloomfield to Lord Malmesbury about England's possible intentions in the event of war, has been, as you know, replied to in a despatch from Lord Malmesbury to Lord Bloomfield. The latter has overstepped his powers by handing this despatch to Herr von Schleinitz, to be communicated to you. Herr von Schleinitz admittedly promised that no copy should be made of it. But Lord Malmesbury is rather anxious lest its contents may become known in other quarters, unless you and Herr von Schleinitz order and make certain that the strictest secrecy is preserved. Lord Malmesbury's anxiety is due to the fact that the Emperor Napoleon suspects him of desiring to form a German league against him. However desirable it may be that the Emperor's ambitions may be somewhat held in check by the thought that such a league may be possible, it is just as essential for the British Minister, in his efforts to influence the Emperor in the direction of keeping the peace, that the latter shall not suspect him of vanity towards himself. The urgency of the matter must be my excuse for applying to you personally.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 30th January 1859.

DEAR COUSIN,—I must write to join with you in thanks to God for the great blessing that has been vouchsafed to us.¹ We are

¹ The birth of the future Emperor William II.

deeply agitated by your description of that fateful day. Poor Vicky must have had much suffering, and the child was in very great danger. I cannot understand how the child managed to be born at all under such circumstances. Please give the Prince every possible nice message from me. I do not wish to worry the dear cousin himself with a letter. But this event has presented a third element, a third creature, to unite us four grandparents ; it binds us even closer than before. The rejoicing in Berlin must be immense, and even here great interest is felt. It was announced to the public from the stage in the theatres, and universally received with enthusiastic cheers. Congratulations stream in on us from all sides.

In the great world things still look gloomy. The Emperor Napoleon is fundamentally determined to go to war, and his proclamations, retractations, disavowals, armaments, &c., &c., are exactly the same as before the *coup d'état* of '51, following the model of his uncle Napoleon I in 1805. I have just been reading, in the Memoirs of Prince Eugène Beauharnais, the uncle's instructions on how he was to behave in Italy.¹ He was to arm with all speed, go on disavowing an intention to fight, but keep up a stream of rumours that Austria meant to attack and treacherously invade Italy ! He sends his stepson articles from the *Moniteur*, prepared by himself in the Camp at Boulogne, which are very similar to those we have just been reading.

To the Same.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 8th February 1859.

DEAR COUSIN,—I often talk to Count Perponcher, and he has opportunities of seeing and talking to Lord Malmesbury, and of comparing notes with various members of the Diplomatic Corps in London. He will therefore be in a position to give better information on all political and personal points than any letter, for one can ask questions of, and receive answers from, a human letter, and that the written word does not permit. I think that at difficult moments such as this that the plan of sending over a trusted but inconspicuous person should be repeated, as it is far safer and answers the purpose better. For the person not only contains what is intended to be conveyed, but he can also gather the impressions essential for the right judgment of how to convey it. I have written

¹ *Mémoires et Correspondance politique et militaire du Prince Eugène*. Edited by Baron A. Ducasse (1858–60).

to the dear cousin in answer to his brilliant letter as frankly and candidly as I could. Perhaps he has shown it to you. He describes his position clearly, and, in my opinion, correctly. Though the Ministry did not wish to be associated with my answer, they fully agree with the ideas contained in it and I have told Lord Malmesbury the Prince's views. It is an essential condition for the continuance and usefulness of our exchange of ideas that the diplomatic world shall be kept out of it, particularly when my delicate position is considered. You will forgive me if I refer you to the Count and to the letter (assuming that the cousin chooses to communicate it). I return with many thanks the copy of the opinion on the present position which was sent to you from Paris. The man knows all the facts, and seems to me to have entirely hit the nail on the head. All that he says is confirmed by our best reports.

We owe you very many thanks for the maternal love and great discretion and friendliness with which you have treated Vicky and for your anxiety to consider in every respect Victoria's wishes and "fidgetiness." God has greatly blessed us, and my heart overflows with gratitude.

We spoke to Count Perponcher about his remaining in our children's service, but without success. He insists that his wife's health is not strong enough for the duties, and for himself that following the temporary appointment, some permanent arrangement would have to be discovered and settled upon. He can think of nobody, but describes accurately the qualities that such a person should possess. May the Holy Spirit inspire you to select the right person! The choice is all-important.

To the Princess Royal.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 9th Feb. 1859.—It was a year from yesterday that you went to Berlin, and nineteen years since I came to London. My nineteen years have not gone much slower to me than your one has to you. What will it look like after the next nineteen years? An unanswerable question, therefore just academic and quite unprofitable!

To Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 10th Feb. 1859.—The times are difficult and obscure, and friends will do well to keep up peaceful communications

together until the storm breaks. The Emperor Napoleon seems determined to provoke, and much, including much fine German, blood will flow. When or how we may be dragged into the whirlpool I cannot calculate, but I am sure that in the long run we shall be unable to escape it. May God forgive the man who wantonly between sleep and waking is bringing so much unhappiness into the world ! If you wish to see where the text of the Emperor's speech comes from, read pages 244 to 270 of the first volume of the Memoirs of Prince Eugène Beauharnais. You will see Napoleon I's information to his stepson in 1805 of his preparations for the Austerlitz campaign, and his orders for the terms on which peace is to be maintained. He says again and again later on : “*Parlez paix, agissez guerre.*”

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 10th Feb. 1859.—Although I have no leisure, i.e. no combination of time with rest, still I cannot leave unanswered your welcome letter of the 3rd, which gave me great pleasure, as a sign that you were vigorous both in mind and body.

I write to you on our marriage day, which has come round for the nineteenth time, and am penetrated at the thought of this by gratitude to a gracious Providence, who has so visibly blessed our union. With this are mingled feelings of thankfulness towards yourself for the unwearying friendship of which you have during this period given me so many weighty proofs in word and deed. If you keep a watchful hand over our child in Berlin, you can give us in the evening of your life no greater proof of your friendship.

In face of the warlike propensities of the Empire, *qui est la Paix*, the nation as well as Parliament has behaved admirably. The pamphlet *Napoléon et l'Italie*² and the Imperial Speech from the throne form together a pair of remarkable documents. In Paris the public seem to be furious at being treated from the very throne with contempt for putting one and two together and getting three as the product ; and seeing what care has been taken to avoid all express promises not to break the peace, and to respect existing

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 388.

² This pamphlet, written by M. de la Guéronnière, and revised by the Emperor, appeared on the 1st February. Its whole scope and purpose were to justify the war on Austria in Italy, and to prepare the minds of the French public for it.

treaties, they are in no way satisfied with the Speech, neither are they ready to go back to work, as the Speech enjoins them.

Count Perponcher was instructed to demand clear explanations here as to what England will do in certain eventualities. You know that such explanations are never given here, and will not therefore be surprised that they were not to be had on the present occasion. On the other hand, I have laid the whole state of things here in detail before the Regent so frankly and conscientiously, that he may draw his own conclusions with certainty, not withholding from him at the same time my advice as to the position of Prussia, which is summed up in this : “ Be *German*, be *National* (in the good and noble sense), and you will be strong, and walk securely.”

All the secret stipulations in the world with this Court or that are not to be compared with the security which is given by a frank understanding and accord with your own people and with public opinion. This, moreover, gives confidence to the public opinion of other countries when it is in unison with your own, and inspires awe when it is at variance with it.

Queen Victoria to the King of the Belgians.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 15th Feb. 1859.—. . . Accept my warmest thanks for your kind letter of the 11th. I still hope that matters *will cool* down—the Emperor personally expressed regret to Hübner for his words, disclaiming the construction put upon them, and saying that *no one could dispute* the right of Austria to her Italian possessions. He has not written to me lately, but I wrote him ten days ago a long friendly letter, speaking out *plainly* our fears for the future, and urging him to aid us in averting the calamity of War. . . .

To the Princess Royal.²

16th Feb. 1859.—We are now established in town, and the first place I went to yesterday was the South Kensington Museum, where

¹ See *Queen Victoria's Letters*, vol. iii, p. 410. The French Emperor had signalled the opening of a new year by an ominous speech. To M. Hübner, the Austrian Ambassador at Paris, who had attended, with the other foreign representatives, to offer the usual congratulations on the 1st January, he observed : “ I regret that the relations between our two Governments are not more satisfactory ; but I beg you to assure the Emperor that they in no respect alter my feelings of friendship to himself.”

² See Martin, vol. iv, p. 390.

two additional galleries have been built of two hundred to three hundred feet in length and twice the breadth of the *Sheepshanks Gallery*, for the reception of the Vernon and Turner galleries from Marlborough House, which latter becomes Bertie's property in November. The pictures will be excellently seen, and the whole gallery has been built in six weeks for £3,000, of brick, with fire-proof floors. Mr. Cole is still in Italy.

The Society of Arts has projected an Exhibition like that of 1851 for the year 1861, but now it comes to me and to the Commission to carry it out, which is quite another matter. We shall discuss the subject on Saturday at the Commission, where it is sure to give rise to no small amount of tiresome "pros and cons."

To the Same.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 9th March 1859.—I was certain that the presence of Lord Raglan and Captain de Ros would give you pleasure. Ours will come when they return, and we can put questions to them. My first will be, Has the Princess gone out? and does she begin to enjoy the air, to which alone she can look for regaining strength and health? Or is she in the way to grow weak and watery by being baked like a bit of pastry in hot rooms? My second: Is she grown? I will spare you my others.

Your description of the Prince's kindness and loving sympathy for you makes me very happy. I love him dearly and respect and value him, and I am glad too, for his sake, that in you and my little grandchild he has found ties of family happiness which cannot fail to give him those domestic tastes, in which alone in the long run life's true contentment is to be found.

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

OSBORNE, 16th March 1859.

DEAR COUSIN,—I return you with many thanks the enclosures that you kindly sent me. Herr von Schleinitz's speech was all that I could desire, and has certainly not failed to make its effect. It was courageous, clear, and simple, and above all true, which is the most important of all in this present reign of lies. Lord Cowley will now be able to force the uncommunicative Emperor to tell the

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 400.

truth. According to what he heard from him before the Mission to Vienna¹ and discovered when he was there, it will be hard for the Emperor to keep on his mask, and now that the carnival is over, it would be most improper that he should. So we shall know in a few days what Europe has to expect. If he wants peace, which is now quite on the cards, the first business is to keep a hold on Cavour's arm (his tongue would do as well, but that is not so easy to lay hold of in the case of Italians). In France they are not yet disquieted. Unrest damages the Emperor and holds his plans up. Also it makes it difficult for him to defend himself and make concessions. He cannot protest his innocence too strongly, or he would have Cavour accusing him before Europe of having broken his word. We must wait quietly and see what Lord Cowley's report is like.

We had a very stormy crossing here yesterday. Everything is in its full glory. The camellias and heaths are blooming wonderfully, and so are the laurels, and the air does one double the good after London, where men go with their afflictions.

Our gentlemen told us much about Berlin. They found Vicky still very unwell.

I have not written the Prince any political letter, because the two Ministries were and are still in perfect agreement, and I hold it my duty to avoid disturbing their joint procedure by letting them think that I am bringing pressure on the Prince and consequently on our own Ministers. The Emperor Napoleon actually thinks that I, Ernest, and Uncle Leopold are working for a Continental coalition against him! I have continually kept Vicky informed of any evidence I have thought worth mentioning, so Fritz will certainly know of them also, and he will not have concealed them from his father.

Memorandum.²

23rd March 1859.—The state of the Italian question is at this moment more confused than ever, because on any attempt to undo the knot, the first point is to discover where the threads are interlaced.

¹ Napoleon III desired to secure the good offices of England in endeavouring to negotiate with Austria a basis of arrangement. This negotiation the Emperor wished to be entrusted to Lord Cowley, "as the most likely mode of arriving at a good result"; and he put in writing under his own hand the heads of such an arrangement as he was prepared to accept. So, armed with a letter from the Queen to the Emperor of Austria, Lord Cowley was sent to Vienna to mediate between France and Austria.

² See Martin, vol. iv, p. 408.

The Emperor Napoleon has pledged himself to support Sardinia in a war *juste et légitime*, and not merely if she shall be attacked by Austria. Cavour believes he holds this promise in writing, and is ready to threaten publication, if he should be thrown over.

We point out by this that the Emperor has sold himself to the devil, and that Cavour can do with his honour what he pleases—yea, even ruin his political existence.

He owns his fault and would be glad to find a way to retreat if he could (without being compromised in the face of his people, which would be his destruction), so that he could say to the Italians, “ You see, I have done whatever was possible for you. You cannot wish me to embroil myself in war with Europe ; it would not improve your chances.”

He is furious at the aggressive language used in Germany which in a month’s time will make all France wish for war—France, which at this moment is only anxious for the maintenance of peace. Still he persists in maintaining, that he has been making no preparations, and many officers, some of our own among them, maintain the same thing.

Walewski is heart and soul in favour of a peaceful solution ; Russia, which anticipated little good from Lord Cowley’s mission, now wishes to effect the solution by the proposal of a Congress. Whether she is jealous of English influence, or feels her own isolation oppressive, or wants to pay Austria off in the Congress for the treatment which she received from her at the last Congress, is hard to divine. Russia speaks of the revision of the Paris Treaty, which will restore her to her fitting place in Europe.

In Paris the Congress is taken as having been proposed by Russia, and it is from there the proposal is to come to us also. We can hear only of Conferences, and these not in Paris : they are only to be held by the five Great Powers.

We sound Austria ; she is ready, but upon condition that no questions of territory are to be touched ; that the objects of the consultation are to be, the evacuation of Rome, Roman reform, and questions about the assurance of the lesser States against attacks from within and from without. No progress in the latter can be made without the concurrence of the States themselves : therefore Conference in Rome.

France desires a confederacy of the lesser States ; Austria would perhaps see in that an equivalent for her separate Treaties.

Sardinia is mad at the thought of being excluded from the Conference. If the lesser States are to be permitted, it cannot take place. We desire as a preliminary condition immediate disarmament in Sardinia. Austria will then have to withdraw her troops also. Sardinia insists on a European guarantee before she stirs.

If Sardinia does not disarm, we tell the Emperor, she may at any moment engage him in a war.

Now the Russian proposal does not make its appearance : Malakoff makes it in the name of France---great confusion ! and he is thereupon called to account. Prince Gortschakoff maintains that he was only ready to take part in a Congress, but had gone no farther. Confusion extreme ! Shall time be given to Cavour to get up an insurrection in Italy, or time to the Ministry here to be beaten on the Reform question so as then to be able to push matters better with their successors ?

Meanwhile we call upon Sardinia for a declaration that she will not attack Austria ; she declares she is ready to go into the Congress of which Russia speaks to her, and urges that her presence in Congress is the only way to prevent insurrection in Italy from breaking out. If things come to a Conference, we are to demand disarmament as a preliminary, and also that the deliberations shall be confined to the four points.¹ Perhaps we may have two Conferences, one European and an Italian one. London, Berlin, or places like Geneva, Aix or Brussels, to be the *locale* for the former.

P.S.—Fresh telegram. Russia will now make the proposal, but for a Congress, not a Conference, in which all the Prime Ministers shall take a part, at any place except Vienna. Is ready to accept our four points.

To Baron von Stockmar.²

23rd March 1859.—My heart impels me daily and hourly to thank you for your last letter of the 11th, and I am daily and hourly

¹ The four points were : 1. Means of assuring peace between Austria and Sardinia. 2. Evacuation of the Roman States by foreign troops, and reforms of internal administration of Italian States. 3. Arrangement to be substituted for existing special treaties between Austria and the Italian States. 4. Territorial arrangements and treaties of 1815 not to be touched.

² See Martin, vol. iv, p. 410.

prevented, by the claims which every moment brings, from yielding to the impulse. Even now I can only do so by sending you a copy of a Memorandum which I have drawn up. It will explain to you the present state of our miserable European complications, so far as we are able here to grasp it. In your judgment about the Empire, its significance, history, and future, I entirely concur, and am delighted to find it expressed with so much *verve* and force, in spite of your bodily suffering.

In our home affairs the confusion is perhaps even greater. A Radical Reform Bill of a Conservative Ministry is denounced as not Radical enough by the Liberal Party (who want no reform, and are especially afraid of a Radical one), headed by Lord John, whom they will not have as leader. . . . I am thoroughly disgusted, and yet I have just completed for the Princess Royal a treatise on the advantages of the constitutional system. It is being dealt with here just at this moment with an utter absence of moral principle, and our statesmen even regard moral principle as not at all necessary on their part, because, owing to the good sense of the country, and the general loyalty and contentment and prosperity, the consequences of the want of it are not immediately felt. While this is so, the public is perilously apathetic and indifferent for and against Ministers and the press—as it always is. As to the issue of the debate, I will not prophesy. Lord Derby expects a majority of 100 against him, Disraeli hopes to pull through. Whether it is to be resignation or dissolution must for the present also remain undecided.

To the Princess Royal.¹

13th April 1859.—'That you take delight in modelling does not surprise me. As an art it is even more attractive than painting, because in it the thought is actually *incorporated*; it also derives a higher value and interest from the fact that in it we have to deal with the three dimensions, and not with surface merely, and are not called upon to resort to the illusion of perspective. As the artist combines material with thought without the intervention of any other medium, his creation would be perfect, if life could also be breathed into his work; and I quite understand and feel with the sculptor in the fable, who implored the Gods to let his work descend from its platform.'

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 323.

We have an art, however, in which even this third element of creation—inward force and growth—is present, and which has, therefore, had extraordinary attractions for me of late years, indeed I may say from earliest childhood, viz. the art of gardening. In this the artist who lays out the work, and devises a garment for a piece of ground has the delight of seeing his work live and grow hour by hour ; and, while it is growing, he is able to polish, to cut and carve, to fill up here and there, to hope, and to love.

To the Prince Regent of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 4th May 1859.—Now that war is declared between Austria and France, the armies are bound to have met yesterday or to-day. The French have 45,000 men in Sardinian territory, of whom quite 30,000 must be in the line with the Sardinians. They expected to have 65,000 men in the line by the 4th or 5th. Monsieur Canrobert has altered the King's whole order of battle, and drawn together the long line which was to have covered Turin and Genoa, over to Alessandria, chiefly in order to cover the railway and Genoa, as being the point most important to the French. In Paris they are highly annoyed (or pretend to be) with Cavour, for having encouraged, or not prevented, the rising in Tuscany and Parma. They fear that something might happen in Rome, which, to their great disgust, would force them to take a line against the Italians. Abandonment of the Pope would at once turn the clergy in France against the Empire. They also fear that the Pope under Austrian advice might take to flight. His Holiness' position must be a very pleasant one !

Bertie had his farewell Audience with him two days ago, and took ship the same evening at Civita Vecchia for Gibraltar.

Russia and France violently deny the existence of an alliance. At first their denials did not agree. Napoleon said there was no treaty ; Gortschakoff, that the treaty contained nothing hostile to England. But now he too says there is no treaty whatever ; but there evidently is something ! Napoleon promises a *neutralité bienveillante* with 60,000 men on the Austrian frontier. Now that the two Russian loans have come to nothing, there should be neither money nor means to effect a concentration of troops. Russia holds herself free to do as she pleases. We have increased the Navy by

10,000 men, and are doing our best to induce belligerents and onlookers to declare the Baltic and Adriatic neutral. France now invites us, in a polite Note to Malakoff, to enter the lists and make common cause for Italy with her, and the invitation has been declined to-day with equal politeness and a statement of how the question stands from our point of view. Malakoff is annoyed at not having been given the Paris Command, but only that of the Army of Observation ; but he is not to join it because it is not yet in existence ! Taking all together the French Army is not enthusiastic for the war in Italy.

All eyes are turned on Germany. The fact that she is gradually recovering is useful in frightening the French. May the Prusso-German Army soon be strong on its legs and organised, and in the meanwhile may it broadcast as few Notes, proclamations, and parliamentary Resolutions, etc., as possible ! Not till Germany is strong can she be sure of respect and of any certainty of carrying out her decisions. Switzerland is behaving cleverly and courageously, and will succeed in maintaining her neutrality. Nobody can tell how the god of war will decide. Neither side appears to have a clear chance of winning.

To the Princess Royal.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 18th May 1859.—What a loss is the excellent Humboldt ! You and Berlin will both miss him greatly, and I am glad that we had another opportunity of seeing him last summer. People of this kind do not grow upon every bush and they are the grace and glory of a country and a century.

To the Prince Regent of Prussia.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 18th May 1859.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—Accept my best thanks for your friendly letter of the 14th. Both it and your speech to Parliament pleased me very much. For me they express true German sense and a determination to act with decision at the right moment, and in the meantime not to be persuaded by others against your better judgment. The others have no right to be annoyed, if they desire to

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 288. The regard expressed by the Prince for this distinguished natural philosopher was apparently not returned. They had met in February 1847 (Martin, vol. i, p. 281), and it seems that the Prince did not express enough sympathy with the Poles to please Humboldt. (Cf. p. 346.)

learn what Prussia decides, knowing as they do that the decision is in the hands of Prussia, and that their very existence is bound up with hers and that they must come into line with her. On your side you will leave no stone unturned to win their confidence, and will at the same time restrain them from taking any unnecessary step which might compromise you. The behaviour of Parliament and the Opposition speeches were very good, and made a great impression here.

No one spoke up for Austria or tried to whitewash her unlovely policy. But there was strong, sound recognition of the only sound basis of any national policy, that of self-interest, of which the highest factor is self-preservation. This is the only possible motive at great moments, and does not deny either morality or nobility. Napoleon's policy fails in morality, because not the well-understood interests of France, but a purely personal interest exploiting for its own ends the passions of a nation not influenced by moral considerations, is its leading motive.

Differences of interests have produced differences in the attitudes of England and Prussia towards the War, and they make the chances of being drawn into it greater and more imminent for Prussia than for England. Here it is possible to talk of untrammelled self-determination, for the chances of our being forced to take part in the war are less and more remote than with you. We may both wish equally to remain out of an unnecessary conflict if we can. However, the people are demanding arms, and petitions come from every town for permission to form Volunteer Corps—not to help the French, but to guard against them! Because popular instinct teaches the man in the street who his enemy is and of what the Italian war is merely the first Act. So Palmerston's policy will have to undergo a complete change if it is to become popular; and in England policies have to be popular to be carried through at all.

The only use of the Royal Proclamation of neutrality—beyond informing our former ally in no uncertain terms that we have ceased to be in the same boat with him—is to warn subjects that it is an offence against the law as it now stands for them to supply either of the contending parties with war material of any kind, or to take part in the struggle in person. Beyond this we do not, from the Government point of view, control our people, who can do as they like. But if a foreign State imagines itself injured it can

proceed against a British subject in that State's own country, in which case he has no protection from us, which he could otherwise claim, or the State can sue him in an English court, where he would, if convicted, be punished according to the law.

I think that this explanation of the Proclamation may be of interest to you. It does not confine or weaken the policy of the Government.

Persigny is again Ambassador here, and the Ministers fear that he will intrigue with Palmerston against them. He protests, however, that he has nothing of the sort up his sleeve, and has been sent here because his latest attempt to overthrow Walewski, Fould, etc., etc., was foiled by the Empress and Madame Walewska, and they could not stand him in Paris any longer. The Emperor had said to him, "*Vous irez à Londres sans raisonner.*" He does not like the war, and indeed asserts that the Emperor did not intend it. Now he expects a few easy victories and that the Austrians will retire to their fortresses. Then perhaps a Marshal will be left in Italy, and the Emperor will return in triumph to Paris.

Man proposes, but God disposes. Poor mankind! *Qui vivra verra.* I will not be so stupid as to try to prophesy, but I may be allowed to hope that there may be no question of either a small or a great victory, and that is what 999 out of 1,000 Englishmen wish for. We came back yesterday from the camp at Aldershot, where that wish was loudly expressed by all the Crimean soldiers.

The return of Their Majesties will not make your work any easier, and I sincerely pity you for the increased trouble and worry.

To the Same.

OSBORNE, 25th May 1859.—The Memorandum of the 18th defines exactly the demands on Prussia at this moment. The sending of General von Willisen, with the instructions that you indicate, is a splendid step, the object of which will be kept strictly secret. Before Prussia can prudently take action, she must first secure certain important conditions. She must come to a complete understanding with Austria, secure hegemony in Germany, and a free hand for being the one to select the moment for action. Once these conditions were agreed to, Prussia would to some extent be able to dictate to France, and might perhaps succeed in preventing an

extension of the war. For a hint that if the Tessin were crossed it would inevitably mean Prussia's entry into the war, might induce the Emperor to consider whether he might not be content with liberating Sardinia.

The *mot d'ordre* from Paris, which is echoed from Petersburg, is *localiser la guerre*, and it sounds thoroughly humane and philanthropic. But its real meaning is, Europe, and particularly Germany, are to sit still and look on, while France beats Austria in Italy and deprives her of her Italian provinces, tears up the Treaties of 1815, and shapes Italy to her liking and makes her dependent upon herself. In return France generously offers, as long as the distasteful work in Italy is on her hands, to abstain from invading England, conquering the territory up to the Rhine, destroying Turkey, and restoring Poland. She demands that Europe shall gratefully acknowledge this nobility of mind and refuse all help to the Austrians. Russia will then consent not to attack Austria and not to fall on Prussia's rear. Count Pourtalès has gone to Berlin to recommend this policy and defend it with all his eloquence, and Walewski expects complete success. In Petersburg also the Minister of Prussia is one of the most active supporters of this view. Russia seeks an alliance with England *pour localiser la guerre*, and there are some here who like the idea. In order to make it easier for Prussia and give a decent pretext for defending this policy in face of the opposition of her German allies, the Prussian Minister is said to desire that there shall be posted on the Prussian frontier a Corps of Observation, which Russia, lacking money and troops, will find very burdensome. The Empress Eugénie, writing yesterday to congratulate Victoria on her birthday in the Emperor's name and her own, says : “*J'ai reçu de bonnes nouvelles de l'Empereur, il espère, grâce à l'attitude qu'ont prise les puissances amies, localiser la guerre, car un embrasement général serait un mal incalculable pour tout le monde. Aussi nous comptons bien que Votre Majesté, qui a toujours à cœur ce qui peut être utile à la paix du monde, usera de son influence personnelle, ainsi que le Prince Albert, dont l'influence est si grande en Allemagne, pour arriver à ce but.*”

I have done my best to serve Germany by taking a copy of this, and I leave it for the Prince of Prussia to estimate what good or prospect of success there may be in setting up a new theory of State-craft, to be recognised by Europe, according to which at any

time the strongest and most warlike State may invade any weaker one and then "localise" herself with that State, until she has destroyed her! The others are to look on and wait till it is their turn, consoling themselves for their sufferings present or to come by the satisfaction of being allowed to enjoy the spectacle of their neighbour's misery! Would it not be best to reply to the Empress thus : "*Localisez-vous en Sardaigne et le mal incalculable pour tout le monde cessera*" ? French arrogance is said now to be unbounded, and they continue to rejoice in the war. In Russia there is great fear of being dragged into war, for it is a fact that they are short of everything, and they would not be willing *faire mauvaise mine*. The professions of friendship for us are therefore very comprehensible.

Montebello seems to have been merely a clash of scouting detachments without further significance ; but it is a pity that the French should be making a boast of it, for it leads them farther still in the wrong direction. It is sure to have caused excitement in Germany again, and if the Germans were asked, "What has it got to do with you?" they would reply in the words of Raoul in *Les Huguenots* to Valentine, when she implores him not to rush out into the streets, but to stay with her, "*Mais on égorgé mes frères !*"

To the Same.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 2nd June 1859.—The desire for absolute neutrality is growing stronger and stiffer in this country, and should the Austrians' unskilfulness cause them to be driven out of Lombardy, a strong feeling will arise here that they should not be allowed to reconquer it. Unless help from Germany arrived before the war had reached the Venetian borders, it would come too late to preserve the territorial arrangements of 1815. I did not expect that the Austrians would get such a regular beating, nor did I imagine that the French would suddenly leave the Sardinians to do all their work for them. They must now have 93,000 men in the line, and on the other hand, must find difficulty in providing the force necessary for the protection of their Rhine frontier. Yet there will soon be more than enough for that purpose if the war goes well and so becomes daily more popular. Their self-confidence and arrogance will increase immensely. If France is victorious, I see no rest or security for Europe for the next twenty years.

To the Same.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 15th June 1859. The times have become much worse. The Austrian management of the war has been beyond all belief, and is only to be compared with their management of their policy. They violated all the rules of diplomacy and logic for the sake of gaining great military advantages, only to renounce the latter for no reason at all, and now they have let themselves beaten at every point, wherever they have met the enemy, in every attack or retreat, large or small. It is now proved that during the first weeks of the invasion of the Sardinian Kingdom, the French army had only 14 rounds per man! All Lombardy is now evacuated, Tuscany, Parma, and Modena are delivered over to the enemy, and along with the Romagna are in full revolt. French arrogance has increased disgustingly, the Italians have lost their heads, and confidence in Austrian military efficiency has disappeared in Europe.

We have got a Ministry which exactly suits Louis Napoleon. Our attempt to keep Granville with Clarendon at the Foreign Office was foiled owing to the personal ambition of Lord John Russell, and now we have him at the Foreign Office, and Lord Clarendon not even in the Cabinet.

Palmerston is anti-Austrian, pro-Italian, and especially pro-Napoleon; Lord John is anti-French, but strongly pro-Italian; Sidney Herbert, Granville, the Duke of Newcastle, Sir George Cornewall Lewis, and Lord Elgin are anti-French and on the whole pro-Austrian; Gladstone is violently pro-Italian. Sir George Grey, Sir Charles Wood, Mr. Cardwell, and the Duke of Argyle are quite neutral. Mr. Milner Gibson admires Mazzini and Kossuth and was a bosom friend of Orsini and those who tried to murder Louis Napoleon. We look forward to pleasant times store for us! And yet the feeling of responsibility will not without its influence over all these various sentiments, as I have described them.

Victoria has bound herself to neutrality, as is seen in her Speech from the Throne and the Address to Parliament. The Russian Circular Note which appeared in *The Times* yesterday is the *plus ultra* of hypocrisy and insolence against Germany, whom it describes as the willing sacrifice of the war. Here the leading sentiments are fear of the war being extended, sympathy for a nation

fighting for liberty and independence, and dislike of the brutal ecclesiastical, military, and police oppression of Austria ; they are balanced by hatred of France, condemnation of her mockery of a policy in Sardinia, and fear for the future, should France triumph. In Russia there is merely hatred of Austria, contempt for Prussia, and the motive for action is enjoyment of the misfortunes of others. The position of Germany and Prussia is a thousand times worse than it was. It appears that the feeling between the French and Sardinian armies is not good, and that in Paris they are worried about the risings in the [Papal] Legations. It is of course possible that many factors may arise to alter the position considerably. Here much feeling is excited against the Ministry, to whom is ascribed the crime of being too pro-Austrian and of having released Louis Napoleon from an alliance which would have bound him to us and moderated his outlook. The Blue Book is now before Parliament, and the public will be able to judge more clearly. Those who were propagating those views will now have to govern, and the Opposition's mistrust of the Napoleonic sympathies of the new Ministry will be more loudly expressed. It is much to be regretted that Lord Clarendon is no longer a member of it. The change of Ministry takes place on Saturday.

To Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 18th June 1859.—Your long letter to Victoria, although its reasoning is entirely correct and its logic unassailable, nevertheless seems to me not to embrace the whole question, and I am constrained to offer the following remarks. The British Government is a national one, and its constitution tends to become daily more democratic. Nations do not reason, and cannot do so in the mass. They only feel. They are guided, not by their own interests, and even less so by principles and arguments of government or international law, but solely by feeling and instinct. By this I mean the instinct of justice, liberty, and more particularly that of self-preservation. Ever since 1817 the British people have been striving for liberty and self-determination at home, and for the same in Europe. During the same period Austria headed the attacks on the liberty and independence of peoples. Since 1830 democracy has won the day in England, and French democracy has clung to

proved a complete success, and the Queen was not at all tired. We are sensible, however, of the rapid change of temperature. We left Osborne with 70° Fahrenheit, and the air sultry, and found in Edinburgh only 40°, with a violent gale blowing. Here, too, it is fearfully cold. Balmoral looks, however, very pretty, and all the new grounds would certainly please you.

In Edinburgh I had an Educational conference with all the persons who are taking part in the education of the Prince of Wales. They all speak highly of him, and he seems to have shown zeal and good will. Dr. Lyon Playfair is giving him lectures on chemistry in relation to manufactures, and at the close of each special course he visits the appropriate manufactory with him, so as to explain its practical application. Dr. Schmitz (the Rector of the High School of Edinburgh, a German) gives him lectures on Roman history. Italian, German, and French are advanced at the same time; and three times a week the Prince drills with the 16th Hussars, who are stationed in the city.

Mr. Fisher, who is to be his tutor at Oxford, was also in Holyrood. Law and history are the subjects on which he is to prepare the Prince. Alfred left us in London, and reached Paris the same time we arrived in Edinburgh. We have already heard from Marseilles that he has sailed for Malta. His ship is to return at the end of February, and he will then prepare for his Confirmation at Easter. He is previously to pass his examination as midshipman. When eighteen, that is, two and a half years hence, he will become lieutenant. The service is really very hard, but he continues to take great pleasure in it.

To the Princess Royal.¹

BALMORAL, 13th Sept. 1859.—I am for Prussia's hegemony; but *Germany* is for me first in importance, Prussia *quā* Prussia second. Prussia will become the chief if she stand at the head of Germany: if she merely seeks to drag Germany down to herself, she will not herself ascend. She must, therefore, be magnanimous, act as one with the German nation in a self-sacrificing spirit, prove that she is not bent on aggrandisement, and then she will gain pre-eminence, and keep it. Sardinia is an example worthy to be noted. “*L’Italia*”

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 490.

is the rallying cry of that State : *for Italy*, not for herself, has she already borne the brunt of three perilous wars. For Italy's unity and greatness the other petty States vote their incorporation with Sardinia as the only State that can realise and uphold the Italian idea. Austria and France permit Sardinia to have Lombardy (perhaps even more), but they attach to it the condition that the King shall go on calling himself *King of Sardinia*, for they feel that in the word "Italy" would lie a mightier power than in the acquisition of even great and wealthy provinces. . . .

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 2nd December 1859.

DEAR COUSIN.—I cannot let our now happily united children return home without giving them at least a line for you. Being together with them was very pleasant, and it did us all good. Both young people have developed to their advantage, and have become far more mature in these last years. I was delighted to find in Fritz so much more frankness and self-confidence, and a far wider intellectual horizon. Many of the books of life lie open to him which before were closed. Vicky has become more sensible and precise-thinking, and has already collected a great deal of experience. May they get back to you safe and sound !

To the Princess Royal.¹

OSBORNE, 7th Dec. 1859.—A Wednesday, a messenger, a letter to you, as if the dear visit had never been. Thus do the waves close in and run on their way, even though a stone cast into them has a moment before divided them with a splash. The observation is not new, but its truth nevertheless constantly strikes the mind with a sensation of novelty, when inexorable time establishes its hold upon us anew.

Your dear visit has left the most delightful impression with us ; you were well, full of life and freshness, and withal matured. I may therefore yield to the feeling, sweetest of all to my heart as your father, that you will be lastingly happy. In this feeling I wait without apprehension for what fate may bring, for that lies in God's hand--not ours.

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 508.

To the Same.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 4th Jan. 1860.— You enter upon the New Year with hopes, which God will surely graciously suffer to be fulfilled, but you do so also with good resolutions, whose fulfilment lies within your own hand and must necessarily contribute to your success and happiness in this suffering and difficult world. Hold firmly by these resolutions, and evermore cherish the determination, with which comes also the strength, to exercise unlimited control over yourself, that the moral law may govern and the propensity obey,— the end and aim of all education and culture, as we long ago discovered and reasoned out together. . . .

To the Same.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 18th Jan. 1860. Your question . . . Whether it is altogether right and expedient for a State to conclude a *Concordat* with the Pope ? . I answer with a most emphatic “ No ! ”

The Catholic Church asserted, and still asserts, a right to unqualified supremacy over the State, and will neither submit to any limitation by the State, nor acknowledge any dependence upon it. The State claims to have authority over its own subjects. Well ! But in Catholic States the Church is the State Church ; from which arises the conflict, which, being rooted in a principle, is irreconcilable. In practice it has turned out that the popular resistance has been more than a match for the Church in her attempts at usurpation. Her means of coercion were not powerful enough to place and keep the people in subjection ; and she therefore needed the arm of the State in order to get her decrees recognised and put in force. In return for this secular aid which the State was called upon to give her, she permitted the State to impose some restrictions upon herself, and to take some share in her government, as, for example, by the nomination of bishops, by taking part in the promulgation of ordinances, and in the moulding of ecclesiastical policy. So it was of old, so is it now again of late years in Catholic countries. Now, however, everyone must see that the mode of action is entirely altered. That supremacy to which the Church has set up a claim, but which she cannot enforce, she now effects through and receives from the State, whose supremacy she

¹ See Martin, vol. v, p. 1.

² *Ibid.*, p. 16.

denies, allowing it in return merely nominal privileges, which do not secure for it any practical control of the Church. In this way the State becomes the servant of the Church, and the Church keeps up a grudge against the State for inter-meddling with her administration—an interference which she repudiates upon principle, and practically only tolerates because she is peace-loving (?) and meek (?), and does not seek for power (!)

But how is it, then, in a Protestant country ? Here the Catholic Church is not merely in the position of setting up a disputed claim to supremacy, but is, moreover, charged with the *divine mission* to destroy the actually existing heretical Church and to convert the people to the true faith. The power which she borrows and receives in this case from the secular arm by means of a *Concordat* becomes, therefore, an instrument, not merely to tyrannise over the people, but also to convert the Protestant population and to annihilate the Protestant Church as being a Church that is false and usurping. She cannot consent to the interference of the Protestant Sovereign with the government of the Catholic Church by way of counter concession ; therefore even the equivalent, futile as it is, which she concedes in the case of a Catholic State, utterly fails. What madness, then, is it for a Protestant Government to impose fetters upon itself, and to surrender its own weapons into the hands of the Catholic Church !

The only thing which a Protestant State can do is to take its stand upon its own fundamental principle—that of *freedom of conscience*. Let it therefore leave the Catholic Church free from all control and from all pressure from that mixed civil and ecclesiastical authority which Catholic States affect, but at the same time let it not place at her disposal one jot of its own power. Should the Catholic Church oppress her people, then this is the affair of both the parties to the *Concordat*. But the State should not be a party to a lesser act of oppression in order to protect its subjects against a greater, and so make itself responsible for injustice. The oppressed will soon help themselves, and the Church, left to her own resources, will be wary how she acts. If she proceeds to extreme measures, her subjects are very likely to turn Protestants. If, on the other hand, oppression be to their taste, they may be left to enjoy it. Under such a state of things persecution of the Protestants by the Catholic Church is simply impossible, for she has always made use

of the State for that purpose, and that, being Protestant, will never lend itself to what would be suicidal.

To the Same.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 25th Jan. 1860. My best thanks for your kind letter of the 20th. I was certain that the *Saint's Tragedy* would not only interest and impress you, but that you would comprehend and grasp the inner spirit of the work. The substitution of doctrines made by stupid men for laws of God-made nature is the core of Catholicism ; the good God did not understand how to make His own world, nature is wicked, given over to destruction - a thing to be abhorred. Yet stay. Not so. The good God made it in the beginning altogether good, and the Devil has spoiled His handiwork ; it is, to speak properly, the workmanship of the latter, and God is unable to help Himself. Then comes the Church and helps Him out of His trouble ; she destroys this wicked, degenerate nature for Him and magnanimously gives Him his own.

This is the true meaning of the flesh and the devil, as presented by the Church. Kingsley has depicted this work of the Church in all its purity in *Elizabeth the Saint*, and the reader's own nature shudders before the image of what the Church has substituted for God's own work.

To the Same.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 25th Jan. 1860. - It is just two years to-day since the wedding-ring was placed upon your finger, and Fritz became your lord. May the auspicious beginning of this union form the exemplar for an auspicious future for it, and may God continue to bless as He has hitherto blessed it ! In love consists the inward tie, in love is the fundamental principle of happiness. Very soon, in two days, the first birthday will be here of the dear little boy. . . . Accept, both of you, for both dear festivals, the very warmest good wishes of my heart. Time flies on with wonderful rapidity.

We came back yesterday afternoon from the opening of Parliament. Alice and Lenchen [Princess Helena] were present for the first time.

¹ See Martin, vol. iv, p. 340. The book is by Charles Kingsley.
² *Ibid.*, vol. v, p. 24.

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 10th Feb. 1860.—I cannot let this day come to a close without writing you a line. It is twenty (! ! !) years to-day since we plighted our troth in St. James's. I see you still standing in the pew not far from the chancel, as the negotiator of the marriage treaty, when I made my entry into the Chapel between Papa and Ernest! We have gone through much since then, and striven after much that is *good*; if we have not always succeeded, the will at least was good, and we cannot be sufficiently grateful to heaven for many a blessing and many a success! You have been to us a true friend and wise counsellor, and if now we are separated by distance, and old age and feeble health do not allow you to lend the same active aid as in former days, we are still united in feeling and in spirit, and shall continue the same, so long as this earthly garment shall hang together.

We are quite well. . . . To-morrow we make our way to town. The children are to give me a surprise forthwith, which is to remain a profound secret to me till half-past six.² ALL GOOD be with you, ALBERT.

One little word I must add on this blessed day! Words cannot express my gratitude and my happiness. I wish I could think I *had made* one as happy as he has made me. But this is not for want of *love and devotion*. Few possess as much. My kindest wishes to you, too! VICTORIA.

To the Princess Royal.³

OSBORNE, 14th March 1860.—The snow is now, I am glad to say, gone, and the camellias blossom again more freely; not a few conceited and too forward buds have been destroyed, however, by the frost at their first outburst. The fragrant heath, which commonly is long past its bloom about this time, has not yet begun to blossom. Still, I have not lost one of my pet plants. Of the alterations in progress, there is nothing to speak of, but a new line that has been given to the road between Barton and the Barton Cottages, which,

¹ See Martin, vol. v, p. 33.

² The "surprise" was a series of *tableaux vivants* by the Royal children in St. George's Hall.

³ See Martin, vol. v, p. 53.

to the eye of an artist, gardener, and lover of nature, is a great improvement, although it will escape the notice of the unreflecting many.

. . . Prussia's position is a weak one, and will continue to be so, as long as she does not morally dominate Germany ; and to be herself German is the secret to bring this about. . . .

Nobody will be inclined to go to war about Savoy, but "*le concert Européen*" would be a powerful check to similar tricks in the future.

To the Same.¹

21st March 1860.—I read yesterday, in the English papers, the passages in Humboldt's Letters, in which I am rather roughly handled. . . . Discourteous to him I believe I never was, *and most assuredly I never said* that the Poles and Irish deserved to be thrown overboard together, although it is quite possible we had some conversation about the similarities and faults in character of both nations. The matter is of no importance, for what does a man not write or say to his intimate friends under the impulse of the moment ? But the publication is a great indiscretion. How many deadly enemies may be made if publicity be given to what one man has said of another, or perhaps even in many cases has not said ?

In politics, one must never assume that a point may be reached, which may be compared with the end of the world. The world goes on, and must go on ; and there are *ups* and *downs*, but the individual should never say, "Only so far will I go and no farther," if things do not turn out precisely as he wishes ; just as little as a soldier would be justified in quitting his regiment in the midst of the war, because it is upon the cards that a battle may be lost. . . .

¹ See Martin, vol. i, p. 281 ; v, p. 54. *The Letters of Alexander von Humboldt to Varnhagen von Ense, 1827-1858* (Leipsic, 1860), caused a sensation owing to the indiscretions in them. There are two allusions to the Prince Consort, both sarcastic and deprecatory. The first (21st February, 1847) alludes derisively to the Prince's letter of thanks for the despatch of the *Kosmos* to him. The second (27th February, 1847) runs as follows : " You are quite right to scold me for being too severe on the man of the ' star-terraces.' I am only severe on the mighty, and that man made a very unpleasant impression on me at Stolzenfels, 1845. ' I know,' he said to me, ' that you sympathise greatly with the misfortunes of the Russian Poles. Unfortunately, the Poles are as little deserving of our sympathy as the Irish.' That is what he said to me, one who is the glorious husband of the Queen of Great Britain ! " The press at once launched an attack on the Prince.

To Mr. Alfred Tennyson, Poet Laureate.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 17th May 1860.

MY DEAR MR. TENNYSON, — Will you forgive me if I intrude upon your leisure with a request which I have thought some little time of making, viz. that you would be good enough to write your name in the accompanying volume of your *Idylls of the King*? You would thus add a peculiar interest to the book containing those beautiful songs, from the perusal of which I derived the greatest enjoyment. They quite rekindle the feeling with which the legends of King Arthur must have inspired the chivalry of old, whilst the graceful form in which they are presented blends those feelings with the softer tone of our present age. Believe me always yours truly,
ALBERT.

To the Princess Royal.²

OSBORNE, 23rd May 1860. — Your letter of the 20th has found me in the enjoyment of the most glorious air, the most fragrant odours, the merriest choirs of birds, and the most luxuriant verdure; and were there not so many things that reminded one of the so-called World (that is to say, of miserable men), one might give oneself up wholly to the enjoyment of the real world. There is no such good fortune, however, for poor me; and, this being so, one's feelings remain under the influence of the treadmill of never-ending business. The donkey in Carishbrook, which you will remember, is my true counterpart. He, too, would rather munch thistles in the Castle Moat, than turn round in the wheel at the Castle Well; and small are the thanks he gets for his labour.

I am tortured, too, by the prospect of two public dinners, at which I am, or rather shall be, in the chair. The one gives me seven, the other ten toasts and speeches, appropriate to the occasion, and distracting to myself. Then I have to resign at Oxford the Presidency of the British Association, and later in the season to open the Statistical Congress of all nations. Between these come the laying the foundation stone of the Dramatic College, the prize-giving at Wellington College, &c., &c.; and this, with the meetings

¹ See Martin, vol. v, p. 91. The *Idylls* were a favourite book of the Prince Consort. His daughter Victoria read them aloud to him during her visit to England in 1861, and at the time of his death she was engaged in making pictures of scenes taken from them on his suggestion.

² See Martin, vol. v, p. 109.

of my different Commissions, and the delectable Ascot races, and the various Balls and Concerts of the season all crowded into the month of June, over and above the customary business, which a distracted state of affairs in Europe, and a stormy Parliament . . . make still more burdensome and disagreeable than usual.

Some successes, however, gladden me. The Ministers have at last determined to unite the separate English armies in India. In this I see the averting of a great danger. . . .

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 9th June 1860.—. . . We returned yesterday from the Ascot races, which unfortunately were made more tedious than usual by incessant rain.

The two young Princes of Hesse-Darmstadt leave England to-day, and have just taken leave. There is no doubt that the elder (Louis)² and Alice have formed a mutual liking, and although the visit happily passed without any declaration being made, I have no doubt it will be followed by further advances from the young gentleman's family. We should not be unfavourable to such an alliance, as the family is good and estimable, and the young man is unexceptionable in morals, manly, and both in body and mind distinguished by youthful freshness and vigour. As heir-presumptive to the Grand Duchy, his position would, moreover, not be unsuitable. . . . The Queen and myself look on as passive observers, which is undoubtedly our best course as matters at present stand. . . .

To the Princess Royal.³

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 26th June 1860.—Accept my best thanks for your welcome letter and the photographs of your plastic labours. They are a real success, and I can fancy that their creation has given you great pleasure and satisfaction. After a time it will become a necessity for you to master architecture, as the complementary and third, if not highest, art. Still, I hope it may be some time yet before you enter upon this study, inasmuch as it cannot be carried into practice without a very serious expenditure, and you (if you should have the means) would have many purposes to apply them to, more useful to your country.

¹ See Martin, vol. v, p. 112. ² Later the Grand Duke Louis IV of Hesse.

³ See Martin, vol. v, p. 123.

To the Same.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 4th July 1860. Your plastic efforts have arrived, and they have been duly admired. The attitude of the Jane Grey is especially natural and happy. Gretchen in Retzsch's *Faust* must have hovered before you in producing it, as Lady Lichfield did in the *Mary Stuart*. They are complete successes.

We have seen the *Orpheus* (Gluck's) twice, and I admire it extremely. It is a real refreshment after our modern sound and fury, and the works of the Italian school, which depend entirely on individual "morceaux," and have no regard whatever to the poetry of the drama. Here we have a poem presented in music, and this is why, with the scantiest materials, the effect is so impressive. Schillag plays the part admirably.

I am engaged on the preparation of my Address for the opening of the Statistical Congress, which costs me a deal of hard work.

To the Prince Regent of Prussia.

OXBORNE, 18th July 1860.

DEAR COUSIN.—It may not be uninteresting to you to hear something that I will beg you to regard as strictly confidential. It was the intention of the Emperor Napoleon, when he offered to have a conversation with you, to show that he wished to maintain peace in Europe. But he intended also to explain his cherished scheme for altering the frontier without disturbing the peace. The key to this work of art is to incorporate the Danube Principalities with Austria. I hear that he has conferred privately with Russia, but, against his expectation, found himself up against a great obstacle, for Russia declared that she must absolutely withstand the idea of incorporation. The Emperor N. must now be very displeased with himself, since this reply, received just before the Conference at Baden, has thrown him quite out of his stride.²

To Princess Augusta of Prussia.

OXBORNE, 28th July 1860.

DEAR COUSIN,—I must write you a word to say how pleased I am that all went so well at the Neues Palais. God be praised! The

¹ See Martin, vol. v, p. 136.

² The Emperor of the French met the Prince Regent at Baden on 16th June to discuss the Emperor's theory of "Natural frontiers," which in the Emperor's mind included a Rhine frontier for France.

little daughter¹ must be a darling, and I can imagine Fritz's joy and patriarchal pride with which he now looks upon a child of either sex. If only the mother will keep quiet enough! With her liveliness that will be hard to manage if she feels well, as she probably does. The Prince Regent must be on his way back from Teplitz. I am curious to hear how the interview went off, and if anything was gained or sacrificed. The Imperial House suffers from the human weakness of accepting more easily that it gives. The threads of intrigue, which are spun in Paris, extend in the most extraordinary way in all directions. One comes across them everywhere. The main idea is to bring about the changes in the East now, and then proceed to the great transformation of the map of Europe.

The Belgian celebrations and the loyal and national enthusiasm of the whole population made the most splendid answer to the suggestion that any free Belgian could be longing to become a slave to France with the bribe of *suffrage universel*. Uncle Leopold may well be a proud man!

To the Princess Royal.²

BALMORAL, 27th Aug. 1860.—Hearty thanks for your dear lines, which I found yesterday on my table under the Staghorn chandeliers. I did indeed miss you! Four of you were absent—Bertie, Alfie, Baby, and you!—but all were well employed and doing well, and for a father's heart that is the chief concern. Your little *tableau vivant*³ is indeed the best of gifts and the best of productions, only it has the disadvantage, that I cannot manage to see it. I console myself, however, with the hope of seeing your first work before long, and although you have always something to object to in it, yet it is to me a source of great delight. The 26th fell upon a quiet day in Scotland, but to me the quiet was the very thing, and accords best with my mood.

The people, however, intend to hold a festival on Thursday in honour of the day.

To the Duchess of Kent.⁴

COBURG, 28th Sept. 1860.—I am writing a letter to you myself, although Victoria and Alice will have written to you already.

¹ Princess Charlotte, later Duchess of Saxe-Meiningen.

² See Martin, vol. v, p. 177.

³ William and Charlotte, the Princess Royal's children.

⁴ See Martin, vol. v, p. 198.

Coburg is prettier than ever, and the weather hitherto has been unusually propitious. Yesterday we visited Ketschendorf, which remains wholly intact, as if good Grandinama might step in at any moment. The Kalenberg and the Festung have become exceptionally beautiful.

Vicky and Fritz are well, and your great-grandson is a very pretty, clever child-- a compound of both parents, just as it should be. Stockmar has aged, and complains terribly of weakness, but is fresh in spirit, and as warm in heart as ever. . . .

I went to Gotha for the sad ceremony, which took place at the Palace yesterday about seven in the morning. . . . Ah ! poor Mama¹ must have had an infinite deal of suffering ! . . . Gotha was very sad under the circumstances.

To the Prince Regent of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 21st November 1860.

MY DEAR COUSIN,-- I use to-day's courier to thank you for your truly friendly letter. You were yourself at Warsaw as you were at Teplitz and Baden, and were perhaps the only one who was able to be entirely honest, not being led astray by your own character nor tied by secret engagements or selfish side-issues.²

It may be true that Baden prevented a great disaster, and Teplitz helped to force Austria into a course which may prove her salvation, but I cannot discover that any result was arrived at at Warsaw. I can find no proper explanation of the secrecy demanded by Russia concerning the French assurances. But since these satisfy neither you nor Austria, and since the only prospect of their being improved upon is through the medium of Prince Gortschakoff, I can only assume that France and Russia are clearly acting together, and therefore we may expect no help from Russia against the *velléités napoléoniennes* ; also that the desire to form a Continental coalition involving England's isolation has been foiled by your loyalty and statesman-

¹ Duchess Marie of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, the Prince's stepmother, had died on 24th September. She was already dead when the Queen, the Prince Consort, and Princess Alice crossed over to Germany.

² In answer to the French demand for "revision of frontiers" on the Rhine, an assembly of Princes at Baden (15th to 17th June) had proclaimed the integrity of Germany. The meeting there at the same time of the Prince Regent and Napoleon was without result. That between the Prince Regent and Francis Joseph I at Teplitz (26th July) gave the Austrian Emperor assurance of Prussian assistance in the event of an attack by France. Both of them met the Emperor Alexander II at Warsaw, but without anything coming of it.

ship. But solid co-operation of Prussia and Austria with England is made infinitely difficult owing to our differing ways of regarding Italian affairs, seeing that in this nation there are excessive and unaccountable sympathies for the revolts in Italy, which met with disapproval in Prussia and aroused horror in Austria.

So far we have heard nothing about this French assurance ; but it is clear to me that Napoleon is going on with his double game, because he finds it easiest and most profitable. He cannot wish to see a strong Italian State with Liberal institutions set up on his very frontiers. He has the power to stop it, and his only motive for not doing so must be that he means to turn the new Power to things which have a more than compensating value to him, and these I can only imagine to be the Rhine and Belgium. He will always be inclined to refer to our policy and his relations towards England in justification of many a contradiction and inconsistency arising from his wish to keep the door open, either to shape Italy in accordance with purely French interests, or to turn against Germany that Italy whose peculiar development he is fostering.

I personally still fail to believe that the corporate State in Italy, brought into being by revolution, civil war, treachery, and invasion, can prove a success. Here, however, enthusiasm is so high that such a view is regarded as high treason. It is a peculiar phenomenon which Statesmen may do well to study and lay to heart. The deep horror at the long misgovernment of Rome and Naples, which Austrian pressure alone has made possible ever since 1816, is the thing which causes the nation to shout aloud for Liberty, and dulls every other feeling or consideration.

Popular feeling is fixed by the facts and circumstances that are presented to it, and not by calculations touching its interests in the future ; a factor which I have often stated and which counts in the management of States governed by popular consent. One may not count on cool appraisement of interests, but must present something accomplished and follow a political line, calculated to call forth the feelings which will effect what is required at the decisive moment. Supposing new conditions really have been established in Italy we may expect that a clearer view of them may induce the British people to see the matter in a different light. At present its only feeling is a justified longing to see an end of the old conditions.

I imagine that Lord John Russell's Note¹ has probably made a bad impression in Germany, and we were annoyed at finding that it had been published. We certainly had not expected that. It has not been well received here either, and has interfered with our urgent desire to soften the reluctant Radical public over the exhortation to Sardinia not to attack Venice. It should be remembered, especially in Germany, that the right to revolt (i.e. of resistance to an illegally constituted authority) has been for centuries an integral part of the Liberal doctrine of the law of the State in England and is now embedded in that law, and that therefore the principles dictating that Note ought not to cause surprise as if it were something new and terrifying. Thus it would be distinctly unwise to make heavy weather over a principle at a moment when it is highly important to reconcile divergences of opinion and serve far higher interests. There is nothing to be gained by trying to reduce a violent breach of every principle of law to a legal basis. The best thing is to say nothing about such things even when the results of them may meet with one's approval. (By these means I recently compounded a dispute with someone regarding the manuring of a field.) One may be convinced in the utility of such methods, without ever dreaming of trying to justify the stink. *Cela serait de mauvaise odeur !*

I trust that the Austrians will be successful in recovering the prestige in Germany and Hungary which their long vacillation has cost them. Their power of resistance in Italy, and also Germany's security against French lust for conquest, will depend on the peace being kept with Hungary and the rest of the States.

The Empress of the French has burst upon this country like a bomb. The secret history of her visit is unknown to us. I will not bore you with mere guesses ; thousands are in circulation.

To-day we celebrate Vicky's twentieth birthday, and I wish you also much happiness on it. May her love and devotion sweeten for you many bitter hours, which are unfortunately inseparable from the duties of your position, and may your children and grandchildren

¹ A Captain Macdonald was hauled out of a train at Bonn by the police. The incident caused an acrid exchange of Notes between England and Prussia. Captain Macdonald complained of the violence used, and also of the way he was treated in prison. But the chief cause of offence was the tone and language in which the conduct of English travellers generally was spoken of by the Staats-procurator or public prosecutor. His words were : "The English residing and travelling are notorious for the rudeness, impudence, and boorish arrogance of their conduct." Captain Macdonald was kept in prison from the 12th to 18th September, when he was tried and fined twenty thalers and costs.

compensate you for the heavy loss you have suffered.¹ Our sons are on a visit with us, I am glad to say, and have naturally a great deal to tell us. Bertie left to-day for his last Term at Oxford.

To Baron von Stockmar.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 3rd Dec. 1860.—Close on the heels of my last letter comes this, to announce to you the betrothal of Alice to the Prince Louis of Hesse. You, like ourselves, will have expected this event, but you will not the less share our joy at it, when you are told that the young people are sincerely attached to each other, and justify the hope that they will one day find their mutual happiness in marriage. We like Louis better every day, because of his unaffectedly genial and cordial temper, his great modesty, and a very childlike nature, united with a firm character, and genuine goodness and dignity.

You will be grieved about poor Bunsen.³ I had a very friendly letter from his widow, communicating the sad intelligence. . . .

To the Princess Royal.⁴

WINDSOR CASTLE, 18th Dec. 1860.—Your letter with the Memorandum as to the law of Ministerial responsibility has given me great pleasure. I send the Memorandum back, as you wish, but I have kept a copy of it for myself. It is remarkably clear and complete, and does you the greatest credit. I agree with every word of it, and feel sure it must convince every one who is open to conviction by sound logic, and prepared to follow what sound logic dictates.

The notion that the responsibility of his advisers impairs the monarch's dignity and prestige is a complete mistake. Here we have no law of Ministerial responsibility, for the simple reason that we have no written Constitution, but this responsibility flows as a logical necessity from the dignity of the Crown and of the Sovereign. "The King can do wrong," says the legal axiom, and hence it follows that somebody must be responsible for his measures, if these be contrary to law or injurious to the country's welfare. Ministers here are not responsible *quā* Ministers, that is, *quā* officials (as such

¹ In the death of the Empress Alexandra Feodorovna, William's sister. She died on 17th November.

² See Martin, vol. v, p. 253.

³ The Chevalier Bunsen had died at Bonn, aged sixty-nine, on 28th November. "A great loss for science," is the Prince's remark in his Diary for the day.

⁴ See Martin, vol. v, p. 260.

they are responsible to the Crown); but they are responsible to Parliament and the people, or the country, as "advisers of the Crown." Any one of them may advise the Crown, and whoever does so is responsible to the country for the advice he has given.

The so-called "accountability" of Ministers to Parliament does not arise out of an abstract principle of responsibility, but out of the practical necessity which they are under of obtaining the consent of Parliament to legislation and to the voting of taxes, and, as an essential to this end, of securing its confidence. In practice Ministers are liable to account for the way and manner in which they have administered the laws which they, conjointly with Parliament, have made, and for the way they have expended the moneys that have been voted for definite objects.

Hercin, too, lies that Ministerial power of which Sovereigns are so much afraid. They can say, "We will not do this or that which the Sovereign wishes, because we cannot be responsible for it." This practical responsibility is of the utmost advantage to the Sovereign. Make independence, not subservience, the essential of service, and you compel the Minister to keep his soul free towards the Sovereign, you ennable his advice, you make him staunch and patriotic, while time-servers, the submissive instruments of a monarch's extreme wishes and commands, may lead, and often have led him, to destruction.

But to revert to the law of responsibility. This ought to be in effect a safeguard for law itself. As such it is superfluous in this country, where law reigns, and where it would never occur to any one that this could be otherwise. But upon the Continent it is of the highest importance; as where the Government is an outgrowth of a relation of supremacy and subordination between Sovereign and subject, and the servant, trained in ideas natural to this relation, does not know which to obey—the law or the Sovereign—the existence of such a law would deprive him of the excuse which, should he offend the law, and so be guilty of a crime, is ready to his hand in the phrase, "The Sovereign ordered it so—I have merely obeyed!" while it would be a protection to the Sovereign that his servants, if guilty of a crime, should not be able to saddle him with the blame of it.

And now a word about the patriarchal relation of kings to their

people and about personal government.¹ That patriarchal relation is pretty much like the idyllic life of the Arcadian shepherds, a figure of speech and not much more. It was the fashionable phrase of a transition-period in history. Monarchy in the days of Attila, of Charlemagne, of the Hohenstaufen, of the Austrian Emperors, of Louis XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV, &c., was as little like a patriarchal relation as anything could be. On the contrary it was sovereignty based upon spoliation, war, murder, oppression, and massacre. The patriarchal relation was sedulously developed in the small German States, whose rulers were little more than great landed proprietors, during a short period in the last century, and was cherished out of a sentimental feeling.

As for the personal government of absolute Sovereigns, that is a pure illusion. Nowhere does history present us with such cases of government by Ministers and favourites as in the most absolute monarchies, because nowhere can the Minister play so safe a game. A Court cabal is the only thing he has to fear, and he is well skilled in the ways by which this is to be strangled. History is so full of examples that I should be ashamed to cite them. . . .

The Sovereign should give himself no trouble about details, but exercise a broad general supervision, and see to the settlement of the principles on which action is to be based. This he can, nay, must do, where he has responsible Ministers, who are under the necessity of obtaining his sanction to the system which they pursue and intend to uphold in Parliament. This the personally ruling Sovereign cannot do, because he is smothered in details, does not see the wood for the trees, and has no occasion to come to an agreement with his Ministers about principles and systems, which to both him and them can only appear to be a great burden and superfluous nuisance. . . .

To the Princess Royal.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 25th Dec. 1860.—Again we miss you greatly at our Christmas table. “*Wir zählten die Häupter unserer Lieben, und siehe, es fehlte ein theures Haupt!*”³ Oh! if you, with Fritz and

¹ The Princess had dealt in her Memorandum with the proposition, that “the patriarchal relation in which monarchs of old were supposed to stand towards their people was preferable to the Constitutional system, which interposes the Minister between the Sovereign and his subjects.”

² See Martin, vol. v, p. 270.

³ We counted the number of our loved ones, and lo! one beloved face was missing.

the children, were only with us ! Louis was an accession. He is a very dear good fellow, who pleases us better and better daily. In my abstraction I call him “ Fritz.” *Your Fritz* must not take it amiss, for it is only the personification of a beloved, newly-bestowed, full-grown son. . . .

But to return to the dear Christmas festival ! Your gifts which were there have caused the highest delight, and those we have yet to expect will be looked for with impatience. To the latter belong William’s bust, Fritz’ boar’s head—for which in the meantime I beg you will give the lucky sportsman my hearty thanks. William shall be placed in the light you wish when he issues (I hope unbroken) from his dusty box. The album, which arrived yesterday morning, is very precious to us, as it enables us to live altogether beside you—in imagination. . . .

Prejudice walking to and fro in flesh and blood is my horror, and, alas, a phenomenon so common ; and people plume themselves so much upon their prejudices, as signs of decision of character and greatness of mind, nay, of true patriotism ; and all the while they are simply the product of narrowness of intellect and narrowness of heart.

To the Same.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE, 26th Dec. 1860.—The article in the *Kreuz-Zeitung* which you send expresses in plain terms the view that *Monarchy* as an institution has for that party a value only so long as it is based upon arbitrary will ; and so these people arrive at precisely the same confession of faith as the Red democrats, by reason of which a Republic is certain to prove neither more nor less than an arbitrary despotism. Freedom and order, which are set up as political antitheses, are, on the contrary, in fact, synonymous, and the necessary consequences of *legality*. If, therefore, upon the one side the binding power of the law is viewed with jealousy as a limitation of the Government’s power, and upon the other as a limitation of the popular will, the fiery advocates of these doctrines will have no true order and no true liberty. “ The majesty of the law ” is an idea which upon the Continent is not yet comprehended, probably because people cannot realise to themselves a dead thing as the supreme power, and seek for *personal* power in government or

¹ See Martin, vol. v, p. 266.

people. And yet virtue and morality are also dead things, which nevertheless have a prerogative and a vocation to govern living men—*divine laws*, upon which our human laws ought to be moulded.

To King William I of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 2nd January 1861.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—What a sad and painful beginning of the fresh year for you! We have just received by telegraph your message that the good King has fought the last fight of his life's struggle. May God's blessing be on him and give him eternal peace and happiness. He was sorely tried here on earth, both morally and physically, and the state in which he lay for so long must have cut especially deeply into your heart. How I pity the poor Queen, although the end must have been in some ways a relief to her. Can you find an opportunity to express my deep sympathy for her? Sadly though the year has started, I must wish that it may continue in happiness, and I desire joy and contentment for yourself, your family, and your people. That God be with you, guard, strengthen and bless you, is the earnest prayer of, Your loyal friend and cousin, ALBERT.

To the Crown Princess of Prussia (Princess Royal).

WINDSOR CASTLE, 29th Jan. 1861.—. . . Thus you can both consciously work for good, and what can mankind desire more? Can anything offer more genuine happiness than this consciousness?

To Baron von Stockmar.¹

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 9th Feb. 1861.—To-day, twenty-one years ago, was a Sunday, and we were engaged in preparations for great events. I went with you through the Anson business, and, on your advice, gave up my objections to him.²

To-morrow our marriage will be twenty-one years old! How many a storm has swept over it, and still it continues green and fresh, and throws out vigorous roots, from which I can, with gratitude to God, acknowledge that much good will yet be engendered for the world! It is now with these twenty-one years, as with the fourscore

¹ See Martin, vol. v, p. 292.

² See p. 47.

years of the Bible, "if they have been delicious, yet have they been labour and trouble."¹

To the Duchess of Kent.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 10th Feb. 1861.—I cannot let this day go by without writing to you, even if I had not to thank you for your kind wishes and the charming photographs. Twenty-one years make a good long while, and to-day our marriage "comes of age, according to law." We have faithfully kept our pledge for better and for worse, and have only to thank God, that He has vouchsafed so much happiness to us. May He have us in His keeping for the days to come! You have, I trust, found good and loving children in us, and we have experienced nothing but love and kindness from you.

In the hope that your pains and aches will now leave you soon, I remain, as ever, Your affectionate son, ALBERT.

To Baron von Stockmar.³

WINDSOR CASTLE, 18th March 1861.—Accustomed as I have been for so many years to share my joys and sorrows with you, my thoughts have been much with you. You were so truly devoted to the poor departed,⁴ and know too what the loss of her is to us! Victoria's grief is terrible; when she has somewhat regained her composure she will write to you, and this will do her good.

Clark sends you his report to-day on the event, to which I have nothing to add but my conviction that from the moment her malady assumed a deadly form Mama did not suffer. Unfortunately she was unable to recognise us when we hurried to her on Friday evening at eight. . . .

Death has saved her many a pang by which we can now see she would have been afflicted; and we must thank God for His gracious kindness. That she had not to take leave of us, and of this earth, is also a blessing.

¹ The allusion here is to the 10th verse of the 90th Psalm in Luther's version, which gives a reading different from our own: "Unser Leben währet siebenzig Jahre, und wenn es hoch kommt, so sind es achtzig Jahre, und wenn es kostlich gewesen ist, so ist es Mühe und Arbeit gewesen." In our version there are no words corresponding to "und wenn es kostlich gewesen ist," the words being, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow."

² See Martin, vol. v, p. 293.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 322.

⁴ The Duchess of Kent had died on 16th March, 1861.

My telegram will, I fear, have caused you great distress. Let me hope you have now your son beside you, as we expect our daughter to-day. I trust you will make him send me a line to say how you are.

Yesterday we had tidings of Alfred's safe arrival at Barbados after some heavy gales. The other children will all be united around us. Louise celebrates her birthday to-day, and will receive the presents which her Grandmama selected for her with loving care. . . .

To the Same.¹

OSBORNE, 5th April 1861.—I write from Osborne, to which we retired three days since. Our leave-taking of Windsor and Frogmore was a very painful one, still the Queen's mind will find more rest here. She is greatly upset, and feels her whole childhood rush back once more upon her memory with the most vivid force; and with those recollections comes back the thought of many a sad hour. . . . Her grief is extreme, and she feels acutely the loss of one whom she cherished and tended with affectionate and dutiful devotion. For the last two years her constant care and occupation have been to keep watch over her mother's comfort, and the influence of this upon her own character has been most salutary. In body she is well, though terribly nervous, and the children are a disturbance to her. She remains almost entirely alone. . . . You may conceive it was and is no easy task for me to comfort and support her and to keep others at a distance, and yet at the same time not to throw away the opportunity, which a time like the present affords, of binding the family together in a closer bond of unity.

I am well-nigh overwhelmed by business, as I do my utmost to save Victoria all trouble, while at the same time I am Mama's sole executor. As Sir G. Couper died just fourteen days before Mama, and was not able to hand over her complicated affairs to anyone, I am wholly without advice or assistance, and have to puzzle out everything bit by bit, and to hunt up whatever is necessary for their comprehension. To add to which, Lady Phipps had a nervous seizure the day after Mama's death, and Sir Charles has not been able to leave her side since, and is detained in London powerless to help me.

¹ See Martin, vol. v, p. 335.



H.M. Queen Victoria and H.R.H. The Prince Consort, about 1860

Mama has remembered all her relations. . . . The Queen takes upon herself the pensioning of her servants, and the continuance of the allowances to Princess and Victor Hohenlohe and her grandson, Edward Leiningen. She has taken Lady Augusta Bruce (permanently) into her own household, who is not only very acceptable for her own sake, but may be of the greatest use to her as a kind of female secretary. She is a most excellent person, and was a great stay to dear Mama, besides being always cheerful in her temper and having a kind heart.

The Princess Royal has arrived safely in Berlin, and the Prince of Wales goes back to Cambridge on Monday. He is to take military duty at the camp of the Curragh of Kildare in Ireland during the summer vacation.

Now farewell ! I hope the approaching spring weather may not prove too exhausting for you.

To the Crown Princess of Prussia.

'24th April 1861.— I regret that the right equilibrium is still not discovered for Germany. There is no defence or weapon against the really great dangers that menace Germany from the side of Italy, France, Hungary, Poland, and Denmark, except a German sense of nationality. As I said in my letter to the King—statesmen cannot afford to lose sight of this fact, and must cheerfully and boldly seek to guide it. I do not defend the inconsistencies and tactlessness of our policy, which seem to have pained and excited people in Berlin so much. But they ought to recollect that our policy includes the noblest of all qualities, that of being national, and that British sympathy with Italy is based on a very noble principle, that of admiration for that nation's self-liberation and self-determination after more than fifteen centuries of ill-treatment, oppression, and mismanagement by others. The Englishman does not believe in German nationality, for his eye is merely met by extravagances on the part of professors and students (Benedek's complaint also), petty rivalries, intrigues, greed, fear, local conceitedness, &c., &c. Let them look to their own failings and refrain from condemning the British ! But you and I, who belong to both countries and know where the shoe pinches, are, as things are, condemned to the pains of hell and may well weep tears of blood. Aumale's

pamphlet¹ has made a great sensation here and is thought by many to be unseemly on the part of a prince. I personally derived much amusement from it. Even as a child I was beside myself with joy when the villain in a novel or a play came to a bad end. That pamphlet caused me the greatest enjoyment.

But this is personal and subjective. It must be judged objectively and by the measure of success that it has among the French to whom it is addressed. In France it is regarded as the worst blow that the House of Napoleon has had, and it has promptly dragged Prince Napoleon down to earth out of the skies. He even wanted to retire from the Senate and get himself elected to the Chamber of Deputies by the Reds of Paris, and to play a more independent part as a popular leader. The passage in the pamphlet about his descent "*des bancs de la Montagne au Palais où le Duc d'Orléans est venu au monde*" has unmasked him. He is not forgiven for not having challenged the Duc d'Aumale. The Empress is said to have told him that if her little son had behaved in such a way she would have smacked him.

I cannot say much about Syria.² Neither party amounts to very

¹ The language used by Prince Louis Napoleon with regard to the Bourbon and Orleans families led to the publication soon afterwards of a pamphlet, called *Lettre sur l'Histoire de France, adressée au Prince Napoléon*, by the Duc d'Aumale, which produced a great sensation in Paris, where it had obtained a large circulation before it was suppressed. The *brochure* was damaging to the Napoleonic party, not less from the facts which it recalled, than from the singular ability with which they were applied. It was known to have caused the Emperor the greatest uneasiness. In a letter from a well-informed authority, among the Prince's papers, it is said that at a meeting of his Council, which had been called to consider what course should be taken in regard to it, the Emperor stopped the Ministers when they spoke of it as a tissue of falsehoods and exaggeration: "No, gentlemen," he said, with great firmness, "it is not so. Nobody knows the truth so well as I do, and there is but one calumny in the letter, and that is the accusation against me—that while my mother was asking protection of Louis-Philippe, I was conspiring against him with some of the chiefs of the Republican Party." In fact, I was ill in bed, with a bad sore throat. Louis-Philippe's reception of my mother was that of a father receiving his child. He folded his arms round her, and promised to do all he could for her and hers; and when she returned to my bedside, her face was still wet with the tears which she had shed." The Emperor, through his secretary, M. Mocquard, published, a few days afterwards, an explicit denial of the Duc d'Aumale's accusation.

² In 1860 a savage civil war broke out between the Druses and Maronites, who were nominally Christians. There was a massacre of Christians at Damascus, in which Turkish soldiers took part. Napoleon III sent a force to restore order. Once there it became clear that the French intended to stay there. The Prince wrote to Stockmar on 4th March, 1861: "We are at this moment puzzled how to get the French out of Syria." In the end, however, a joint Commission of five Powers (on which Lord Dufferin represented England) was appointed to settle the affair. A Christian Governor under the Porte was appointed, and in May, 1861, the French force returned home.

much, and they are all the most barbarous and cruel ruffians in the world. I think that the Maronites are the worse of the two. France is acting purely for herself, and in a purely Catholic, not a Christian, sense. With all these executions of people, who are in the bad books of the Catholic priesthood out there, we must connect that same priesthood in France, and also the French claim to be the protectors of all Eastern Catholics, which appears with such ostentation in treaties with China, in Japan, Cochin China, the South Sea Islands, Arabia, Abyssinia, and even in India. It is no interest of England or Prussia to help to build up this new menace to the world.

To King Leopold I of the Belgians.¹

WHITE LODGE, 3rd May 1861.—Were I at the head of the Prussian Government I would go to work with all the energy I could command; doing so, however, from pure patriotism, prompted by sincere enthusiasm for popular rights, for a Constitutional system, freedom, and German unity, and not actuated by hypocritical feelings, like those of the Prussian Government, which makes an immoral “convenience” of the Holstein question, lays stress in Denmark upon the maintenance of the rights of the States to control their own Budget, and at home raises money for the augmentation of the army without the knowledge of the Chambers, and in the face of all its promises to them, while at heart determined not to listen to a word on the subject of popular rights. Standing in such a position as this, Prussia ought to hold her peace, and nothing but mischief can happen to her from omitting to do so, just as happened in 1848, 1849, and 1850.

To the 5th Earl Stanhope.²

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 2nd July 1861.

MY DEAR LORD STANHOPE,—I take the liberty to send you a recent German publication, which I think will interest you.³ Herr Freytag is the author of the popular German novel *Sollen und Haben*, known in this country as *Debit and Credit*; of the tragedy *The Fabians*, which attracted as much attention as the above novel; and many other works. In this work he has (inspired perhaps by Lord Macaulay's introductory chapter to his history) tried to give pictures of the social, political, and military life of Germany from

¹ See Martin, vol. v, p. 344.

² *Ibid.*, p. 205.

³ Gustav Freytag's *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit*. Freytag was an intimate friend of Stockmar's.

the sixteenth to the eighteenth century ; and the care with which he reproduces interesting and forgotten documents of the time is most meritorious, as he makes the people oftentimes speak instead of giving us his own words ; and in this exactly lies the originality and attraction of the book. Ever yours truly, ALBERT.

To King William I of Prussia.

Osnorne, 14th July 186

DEAR COUSIN,—Fritz has decided to hasten to your side, and be able to reach Baden by to-morrow afternoon. I have or minute before he undertakes this *tour de force*, but I must repe two lines what my telegram of this morning expressed. Fritz will tell you by word of mouth of our gratitude to God for preservation.¹ We pray that He may likewise avert from your bel head every danger. I can imagine your thoughts. You were ri with me in Hyde Park when a similar attack was made on Vict Since you are sure to be besieged with letters, I beg you to l mine unanswered.

To Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

Osnorne, 22nd July 186

DEAR ERNEST,—I have received your protest against the (in embryo) of a marriage between Bertie and a Danish prince. I am not, as you suppose, asking, " What has it to do with you for your position, relationship, and friendship entitle you to a interest in Bertie's welfare and in future possibilities in pol But I do complain of your discussing matters of so private and del a nature with third parties, and sending me a Memorandum written by a secretary.

As regards its contents, I find nothing to object to in them, except a disregard of certain political motives, such as France's interest in the Holstein question not being decided in Germany's favour, and England's supposed interest in maintaining the Danish monarchy intact. In fact, my personal feelings are really in perfect harmony

¹ The King of Prussia was attacked by Oscar Becker, a student of Leipzig University, born at Odessa, in the Lichtenhaler Allee at Baden-Baden, and slightly wounded. Becker regarded the King as an obstacle in the way of German unity.

² Evidently Prussia was already harbouring the designs which led up to the Danish War of 1864. The Prince of Wales and Princess Alexandra met at Spires on 24th September, 1861, when the Prince Consort noted in his diary (30th September) that " the young people seem to have taken a warm liking for each other." They were married on 10th March, 1863.

with your Memorandum. Therefore if we managed to keep Bertie and Princess Alexandra apart, putting before him at the same time a number of other possibilities, it is curious that you should be the one to enlighten him on the subject, and by naming the Princess as one whom he must not be tempted into marrying, to call his attention to the existence of that forbidden fruit. (I refrain from mentioning that we, as his parents, had a right to expect that you would not discuss such important matters with Bertie without our knowledge and behind our backs.) Since then, all manner of reports have come to him of the young lady's beauty, which has been further confirmed for him by a photograph on the walls of the Duchess of Cambridge's house at Kew. We have explained to him the difficulties in the way of such a choice as well as we could, and he has taken it in as far as a youth of his age and disposition can do. Since, however, these political views are shared by no one else in England, and we have against us the Ministers, the press, and the public, all we could do in practice was to discover some other *partie* that Bertie would accept (for he wishes to marry early, and it will be for his good morally, as well as socially and politically). There is such a complete lack of competition for the honour !! We made opportunities for Bertie to see two others, and he took a dislike to both. Vicky has racked her brains to find someone for us, but without success ! Princess —— is not pretty enough, and there is no one else. . . .

Thus it became clear to us that Princess Alex was indicated by sheer force of circumstances. This being so, it was and is of the highest importance that such a marriage should not appear in the light of a Danish triumph over ourselves and Prussia, but that it had been set on foot purely through the intermediary of our Prussian children, without the knowledge of Denmark or of the Cambridges, and that our Government had nothing to do with it. This is the only way to prevent a break with Prussia and the only way to keep the game in our own hands, impose the conditions that we think necessary, and as far as we can, take off its political edge.

I have always been worried by fear that the public might get wind of the plan, therefore I am sorry that you know about it. For if it gets known about (mere rumours may be ignored) before we are ready, our Ministers will take charge, and we shall come into direct touch with the Danish Court (a Power which we desire to keep out of it), and it will become obvious to the world that the match is

immensely popular here. Neither statesmen nor the press have made the slightest progress recently in the Holstein affair. On the contrary, whilst you in your Memorandum coldly describe the Protocol of 1852 as a vague statement, involving no responsibility, that it would be a good thing for the Danish monarchy to be kept intact, Lord John Russell, supported by Lord Palmerston, proposed six weeks ago that Holstein, not Schleswig, should be guaranteed by Europe to Denmark. The proposal was only got rid of after a hard fight. Such an alliance as that which is suggested for Bertie would not weaken us in our struggle for truth, justice, and fairness. It would strengthen us, for the altruism of our sentiments would be a very strong foundation, whereas at this moment these sentiments in me are suspect, since I am a German and your brother.

In short, we know the dangers arising out of politics and our relationship, and we realise all the arguments against the match. But since, in our anxiety to found Bertie's future on a happy family life, we cannot pick and choose, it is our duty, this being so, to keep the matter as far as possible in our own hands, so as to be able to diminish the disadvantages as much as we can.

I do not know if it was wise to write so fully to you on this subject, but I had no choice between either entering upon a long and perhaps dull explanation, or refraining altogether from replying to the point raised by you, and that would have looked unfriendly and discourteous.

To Queen Augusta of Prussia.

KENMARKE HOUSE, KILLARNEY,¹ 27th August 1861.

DEAR COUSIN,—On our arrival here yesterday I telegraphed my thanks for your good wishes, and the first thing I do this morning shall be to repeat my thanks in writing. I value greatly your unchanging love and friendship. It seems that Vicky arrived with the infant safely at Reinhardtsbrunn, and the same with Fritz in Berlin. Their long stay with us was a great refreshment to us, and I think it did them good.² Fritz has decidedly made a conscious advance

¹ The seat of Lord Castlerosse.

² When in exile in Holland the Emperor William II recollects clearly this visit in the Isle of Wight from June to August 1861 (he was then two and a half years old) with his father, mother, and Princess Charlotte. In his Memoirs of his Youth he writes: "I visualise very exactly the personality of my grandfather. He paid a great deal of attention to his eldest little grandson, and would place me in a napkin and swing me."

in his mental and spiritual development, and that pleased me. Vicky also has made good progress, and the children will certainly flourish, if properly managed, and especially if they get good air. Neither the child nor his father is naturally strong, either as regards the mixture of blood or the strength of their nerves, which latter particularly should not be over-strained.

To King William I of Prussia.

BALMORAL, 1st September 1861.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—A despatch from Lord Augustus Loftus informs us of your friendly wish for Bertie's presence with you during the first part of the Mancœuvres so that he may see those instructive movements of troops. If we cannot meet your friendly kindness and affectionate consideration in every particular, it is because of a long-standing engagement for Bertie to be present at a function which the City of Dublin desires to give on the occasion of his departure from Ireland, and which cannot very well be upset. We much regret this, but hope that the second part of the Mancœuvres will be profitable and instructive for a young soldier. He did his part at the Curragh Camp very well, holds himself better, and has learned everything methodically from the bottom up to command of a company. He has been drilling three times a day, and appears to have enjoyed it.

We were very happy in having Fritz and Vicky with their dear children with us for so long, and hope that the stay at Osborne and the sea bathing did them all good. I trust that you were pleased with the result of your baths, and can allow yourself the rest which is necessary for their success, for you have a very exhausting autumn in front of you.

We were extremely pleased with our visit to Ireland. The country has visibly made great progress in the last eight years, and is conscious of the fact. We had a most hearty reception everywhere that we went, and returned here yesterday rather tired. We hope to stay here until the end of October. At Osborne we had a swarm of royal visits about which Fritz will have told you, as also about the remarks of the King of Sweden, on which I have written to Fritz a full account. The French neighbour seems to have made him greedy for conquest, and to imagine that if he can get his

fingers round Italy, Hungary, Poland, and Sweden, he merely has to close his hand and give the bodies lying in it a tight squeeze. Then he will be able to give his neighbours on his right and left a good blow on their noses !

To King William I of Prussia.¹

BALMORAL, 6th October 1861.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—Lord Clarendon will be the bearer of these lines, and will take care to be in Berlin by the day indicated. It was a very kind thought on your part, that on the day of his arrival he should gain a step in advance among the envoys. With reference to the further kindness which you have designed for him by the gift of "The Black Eagle," I am authorised to say that, gratefully as Victoria would be disposed to accept such a distinction for her representative, and happy as this particular distinction would make her, she is nevertheless compelled to suggest that the offer of it should not be made.

Over and above the reason, which I have already taken the liberty of submitting to you through Augusta as likely to govern the decision, there is the further reason, that Lord Clarendon as Foreign Minister had to prohibit numbers of persons from accepting Foreign Orders, and it is possible he may have again in the same capacity to follow the same course, and it would be taken amiss, were he to make an exception in his own case to a rule which has been so rigorously maintained. Lord Granville, at the Coronation of the Emperor of Russia, the Duke of Northumberland at that of Charles X, Lord Beauvau at that of the Emperor Ferdinand, were also compelled to decline the distinction, and the case of the Duke of Devonshire seems to have been a peculiar one, and to have arisen through the relations of personal friendship which had subsisted between the Emperor Nicholas and himself.

Bertie has come back in raptures with his excursion to the Manceuvres, and cannot speak sufficiently highly of your kindness to himself, and to all the English officers. It was a matter of great satisfaction to me, that so many of these had an opportunity of witnessing the reception given to you on the Rhine, and of bringing back with them so good an opinion of the Prussian army.

¹ See Martin, vol. v, p. 394.

Your interview at Compiègne¹ is to take place to-day. The whole Diplomatic Corps is pricking up its ears, and as these are tolerably long, the spectacle is remarkable.

However, to-day, I will spare you on the subject of politics and remain, as ever, Your true cousin and friend, ALBERT.

To Baron von Stockmar.²

WINDSOR CASTLE, 28th Oct. 1861.—I must announce to you our safe return to ancient Windsor, where we are once more settled. The first day the Queen's wounds were opened afresh, and she suffered greatly, as it is the first time she has stayed here without finding Mama at Frogmore. The void struck home to the heart; but now habit, with its healing power, grows daily stronger.

The death of so old an acquaintance as Sir James Graham³ will have distressed you not a little. Politically he was used up, especially as he had not the courage to undertake the part which, from his position and experience, devolved on him, of moderator and arbitrator amid the complications of every-day policy. . . . His loss, important as he was, will therefore be scarcely felt in the country as a loss.

The speeches of the King of Prussia at Königsberg⁴ have produced a bad impression here, and the theory of the Divine right of kings (apart from being an absurdity in itself, and exploded here for the last two hundred years) is suitable neither to the position and vocation of Prussia nor to those of the King. The difficulty of establishing united action between Prussia and England has been again infinitely augmented by this royal programme. Otherwise, everything seems to have gone off admirably at the Coronation. . . .

To the Crown Princess of Prussia.⁵

WINDSOR CASTLE, 19th Nov. 1861.—May your life, which has

¹ During the return visit paid by King William I to the Emperor Napoleon at Compiègne on 11th to 12th October, Napoleon avoided long political discussions, and merely touched on a few questions, such as a proposal of a Franco-German trade treaty, recognition of the Kingdom of Italy, the business of the National Confederation. William I refused discussion, but gave it to be understood that recognition of Italy depended on pacification of the whole Apennine Peninsula, and that he did not mean to follow Victor Emanuel's example by driving out all his fellow-princes in Germany.

² See Martin, vol. v, p. 407.

³ Sir James Graham (1792-1861). Home Secretary 1841-46; First Lord of the Admiralty under Lord Aberdeen.

⁴ King William I was crowned at Königsberg, the original home of the Dukes of Prussia.

⁵ See Martin, vol. v, p. 414.

begun beautifully, expand still further to the good of others and the contentment of your own mind ! True inward happiness is to be sought only in the internal consciousness of effort systematically directed to good and useful ends. Success indeed depends upon the blessing which the Most High sees meet to vouchsafe to our endeavours. May this success not fail you, and may your outward life leave you unhurt by the storms, to which the sad heart so often looks forward with shrinking dread !

Without the basis of health it is impossible to rear anything stable. The frightful event in Portugal¹ stands in strong outline before our eyes.

Therefore see that you spare yourself now, so that at some future time you may be able to do more.

To King William I of Prussia.

WINDSOR CASTLE, 22nd November 1861.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I must not longer delay in thanking you for your friendly and gracious letter of the 6th, brought to me by Lord Clarendon. He returns most delighted with his mission, and deeply appreciates the distinctions that you showered upon him, and in particular the confidence which you showed him.

It must have been a great strain on you and the dear cousin. It was a great shame that Vicky's health gave way under it, and that she had to miss Breslau.² She seems to have been quite ill and still to be delicate, and we hope that for the time being you will forbid her to do anything rash, and especially to tire herself in society or sit up late at night, so that she may not come off the sick list—in the military sense—too soon. Then, when quite recovered, she will be able to do her duty properly.

The death of poor good Pedro has affected her deeply. It has shaken me in an extraordinary way, for I loved and valued him greatly, and had great hopes that his influence might contribute towards setting on its legs a State and nation which had fallen low.

¹ The death of King Pedro V of Portugal, whose father was a cousin of Victoria and of the Prince Consort, deeply affected Albert. There is tragedy in his warning to his daughter when we consider his own death, which followed so soon afterwards—caused not a little by his own neglect of this same warning.

² The Crown Princess had caught a severe cold at the Coronation at Königsberg. Breslau was the scene, on 12th November, of the unveiling of a monument to Frederick William III.

It is to be hoped that the fruits of his government may long outlive his short span, for it was his desire to establish sound principles and implant roots in his people's minds, which might eventually grow of themselves. Louis will be a poor substitute for his brother, although he is a good honest soul, and has the advantage of having seen something of the world before being called upon to bear the burden of government. The second brother, John, whom you saw at Königsberg, is a fine fellow, and much like Pedro in character.

I am greatly indebted to you for your account of the Compiègne conversations. You seem to have skilfully avoided the evils that might have attended your meeting, and your opponent had to be satisfied with a mere "*tirer au mur.*" Since then he has been obliged to take an immense stride—to render an account! This account does not look nice, but we firmly believe that it is not the complete or entire one. Just as a wild youth, whose debts his father has at last promised to pay, goes straight off to the horse-copers, jewellers, &c., &c., and orders a lot of things, which will go into the hotch-potch to be paid for with the rest, so the Emperor, on the very day of his signing his repentance from sin, goes and orders another twelve armoured Frigates. Whilst not reducing very much himself, he has cleverly managed his confession so as to give you and me a great deal more trouble in keeping up the standard of our defences, and the blow, after your Proclamation, is *perfide*. For the moment the lack of money in Paris will work in favour of maintaining peace, and will be much in the way of his Italian-Hungarian-Polish schemes. I trust that the respite may be used, especially by Austria, for setting domestic affairs in order. We know that since he ascended the throne Napoleon has added each year 80,000,000 thalers to the French national Debt, and now comes this little incidental matter of 1,000,000,000 francs!

I can tell you little of what is happening here. Both privately and politically we are in complete calm. The potatoes have failed in Ireland, and here there will be unemployment in the cotton industry, but they hope the distress will not be excessive. Bertie wishes to visit the "Promised Land" this winter, and will probably travel via Vienna, Trieste, Corfu, &c., &c. Little Leopold has arrived safely at Cannes. Alfred has sailed from Halifax to Bermuda, to join the squadron destined for the (unnecessary) Mexican Expedition.

With Victoria's and my own sincere greetings for the dear cousin,
I remain as always, Your loyal friend and cousin, ALBERT.

Draft for a Message from the Queen to Lord John Russell.¹

W. CASTLE, 1st Dec. 1861.—The Queen returns these important Drafts, which upon the whole she approves ; but she cannot help feeling that the main Draft—that for communication to the American Government—is somewhat meagre. She should have liked to have seen the expression of a hope, that the American captain did not act under instructions, or, if he did, that he misapprehended them—that the United States Government must be fully aware that the British Government could not allow its flag to be insulted, and the security of her mail communications to be placed in jeopardy ; and Her Majesty's Government are unwilling to believe that the United States Government intended wantonly to put an insult upon this country, and to add to their many distressing complications by forcing a question of dispute upon us, and that we are therefore glad to believe that, upon a full consideration of the circumstances of the undoubted breach of International Law committed, they would spontaneously offer such redress as alone could satisfy this country, viz. the restoration of the unfortunate passengers and a suitable apology.

This last political act of the Prince Consort meant the maintenance of peace between England and the United States, where, ever since the spring of 1861, the Civil War between North and South had been raging. On 8th November a Federal warship had stopped the British mail steamer *Trent* and taken prisoner two Confederate agents. The British Cabinet resolved to demand satisfaction for the insult offered to the British flag and the breach of International Law. The garrison in Canada was reinforced, and the British press adopted a tone of menace. It was due to the Prince Consort that a Note, based on the draft prepared by him and written in a far milder tone than that originally intended, was despatched by Lord John Russell to Washington. The sentence inserted by his advice was that it was impossible to believe that the American captain had acted by the orders of his Government, or had properly understood their directions, and the captured Confederates were released.

¹ See Martin, vol. v, p. 422. Note in the Queen's handwriting : " This draft was the last the beloved Prince ever wrote ; he was very unwell at the time, and when he brought it in to the Queen he said : ' I could hardly hold my pen.' —VICTORIA R."

Weeks after Albert's death, when the war danger was over, Queen Victoria wrote to her Prime Minister¹ :

" Lord Palmerston cannot but look on this peaceful issue of the American quarrel, as greatly owing to her beloved Prince, who wrote the observations upon the Draft to Lord Lyons, in which Lord Palmerston so entirely concurred. It was the last of the kind that he ever wrote."

Lord Palmerston answered (12th January, 1862) in these words :

" There can be no doubt that, as your Majesty observes, the alterations made in the Despatch to Lord Lyons contributed essentially to the satisfactory settlement of the dispute. But these alterations were only one of innumerable instances of the tact and judgment, and the power of nice discrimination which excited Lord Palmerston's constant and unbounded admiration."

¹ See Martin, vol. v, p. 426.

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